

WORLD OF Work

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ILO

Women
reach
for the
top



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INTERNATIONAL LABOR OFFICE

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Editorial

Paths to equality

Improving the economic, social, cultural and political situation of women is a major issue of our age. Fortunately, thinking has evolved for the better over recent years. In 1975, with the launching of the International Year of Women, discussion of women's issues began to extend far beyond national boundaries. Concepts have since then matured, strategies have become clearer, and the lessons of experience have revealed new ways to the attainment of genuine equality.

The continuing role of the ILO as a pioneer and champion in the promotion of the cause of women workers at the international level is self-evident. During its formative year in 1919, the ILO promulgated the first standards concerning maternity rights; since then, concern for women's issues has continued to expand over the years, as exemplified in the series of Conventions and Recommendations and in the wide range of practical activities and actions designed to combat discrimination based on sex.

The progress and the weaknesses of the condition of women at work in the member States of the ILO remain a subject of close examination and discussion within the Organization. Well aware of the risks to which the most vulnerable categories of workers are exposed in times of crisis, the ILO is currently mobilizing, with renewed energy, governments, employers and workers to promote and protect equality of opportunity for men and for women in the world of work.

A key question at the present time is participation of men and women on an equal basis at the decision-making level. It is here that the most intractable inequalities persist. Solution to problems in this area offers a real possibility to guarantee the elimination of all discrimination over the long term.

More than any other factor, the distribution of power in public life, in enterprises, in employers' and workers' organizations, determines the conditions which will forge the society of tomorrow. Women can, and must, obtain their fair share of this power. To exercise such power requires talent and skills that must be developed through training and education. It is therefore of vital importance to expose as large a number of women as possible to training opportunities.

On this key issue the Dossier "Women Reach for the Top" in the following pages attempts to present facts and information which are as complete and as objective as possible. Where do women stand, today, on their difficult climb to positions of responsibility? What obstacles impede their progress?

On these and related themes women from all sectors, with varying degrees of professional responsibility, express themselves frankly and with firm conviction. They illuminate the paths to be followed so that each woman, whatever her culture and background, from whatever part of the world, can develop her full capabilities to the ultimate benefit of all of society.

READEX
FICHE

Mary Chinery-Hesse
Deputy Director-General



CRPM/Lausanne



Women in authority: the ideal and the reality

Maria Angélica Ducci*

At the current rate of progress it will take a very long time to bring about equality in sharing decision-making between men and women in all areas. In terms of human rights and social justice, such equality is absolutely vital; it is also the best way to promote change with a human face.

Would the world be a better place if women had equal access to management positions? At today's pace, it would take five centuries for this question to be answered with certainty. If the rate at which women accede to managerial positions continues at the same pace, it will take another 475 years before men and women are represented in equal numbers in the higher echelons of political and economic power. As things stand at present, only six of the 179 States members of the United Nations are governed by a woman. Women occupy barely 3.5 per cent of ministerial cabinet posts, and 93 countries have men heading their ministries exclusively.

Most of the women in leading positions in government have broken new ground in education, culture, social welfare and women's issues. The areas of activity in which women are most commonly accepted are actually "extensions" of the traditional roles that, throughout the world, the woman assumes in the family. Public opinion is still surprised by the appointment of a woman to high office, especially so if this happens in spheres historically associated with supposed "male vocations"

A near absence

Almost everywhere in the world, women have the vote and account for over half of the electorate. With but rare exceptions, however, their political activities are restricted to anonymous and informal roles in local communities. They hover at the margins of the higher levels of trade union, political, governmental and corporate life, and of interest groups.

Until 1987, women occupied barely 10 per cent of parliamentary seats, with

the northern and eastern European countries taking the lead. Recent political restructuring in eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union has brought with it a sharp fall in women's representation in those parliaments. The same holds true for the trade unions, despite the fact that women account for nearly one-third of union memberships. Indeed, the women to have reached the leadership of a trade union can be counted on the fingers of one hand. This pattern of inequality is mirrored, indeed accentuated, in the employers' organizations, where women are practically absent. Everyone knows the situation in professional employment. Women continue to be concentrated in lower-qualified, lower-paid jobs, and very few manage to attain managerial posts, though the trend is on the increase.

Lower-paid jobs

The "invisibility" of women in public life, and consequently in political, economic and professional activity, is both the cause and consequence of their being consistently barred from positions of authority. The way in which cultural and social models repeat themselves creates a setting that is hardly conducive to women progressing much beyond the limits of their homes and immediate working and living environment. Enmeshed in a tangle of little encouragement and probable reprobation, women are hesitant about struggling to advance in professional or political careers, as to do so would frequently put at stake the subordinate role that hitherto at least guaranteed them a secure position within the family circle. On the other hand, as they hardly manage to participate fully in the decisions affecting

their lives and families, it will prove difficult for them to break out of the vicious circle.

Rights and obstacles

Why is it then essential for women to play an equal role in decision-making? The International Labor Organization approaches this objective from three points of view. First, it is a clear question of human rights: women make up half the population and more than one-third of the workforce and so their right to full citizenship and equality of

THE ILO CHOICE

The many factors which influence the positions women occupy and their career patterns in the world of work require a coherent and multidisciplinary approach to women's problems. This approach has been adopted for a major two-year ILO initiative launched at the beginning of 1992 called the International Departmental Project on Equality for Women in Employment.

The main objectives are:

- to enhance the effectiveness of legislation in promoting equal rights in employment by ensuring implementation and revising legal provisions which support direct or indirect discrimination against women in employment;
- to increase awareness of the obstacles to equality in the labor market, examine the reasons for the persistence of these obstacles and propose ways of removing them;

Dossier

ation and effectiveness of development, as women are capable of providing a different sort of ability and creativity, which has not so far been tapped, and they can ensure a better balance in the allocation of resources and distribution of the benefits of progress.

Two types of obstacle

There are two types of obstacle to be overcome in order that women can have access to decision-making positions - structural and situational. The former include the infamous differences in levels of education, occupational experience and income levels as compared to men. These combine with and are reinforced by the situational factors such as the burden of family responsibilities, legal, psychological and material dependence on their spouses and male relatives, colleagues or bosses, and the fact that society is not prepared to change its attitudes and support women in assuming positions of responsibility. The deeply rooted "gender ideology" underlying all this constitutes a system of barriers to the upper echelons. It takes the form of values, attitudes and behavioral patterns which inhibit development and the recognition of the leadership qualities of women and which thus demand additional sacrifices from those who nevertheless strive to overcome them.

Additional sacrifices

It has been estimated that women's participation in excess of 30 per cent in the upper echelons would be necessary for any noticeable difference to be made to the nature and tenor of the decisions taken in the areas affected. So what would this difference be? Women tend to speak with a "different voice" which as a rule lays stress on the social ethos of development, that is to say education, health, children, environment, dialog and peace. Conversely, men tend to concentrate on the economic aspects such as production, trade, profitability, finance, technology and national defence. If we really aspire to any development of the human lot involving both economic growth and social equity, the best way to achieve this coveted objective will be by having men and women sharing in decision-taking. □

**ILO official, Special Adviser on Women Workers' Questions.*

Jacques Maillard

opportunity and treatment in employment must be clearly expressed by their participating in all levels of activity. Secondly, it is a matter of social justice

to combat discrimination against women, which is at its very harshest when it comes to employment. Thirdly, it is an essential requirement for the acceler-

ES AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL APPROACH

- to examine policy options, strategies and practical measures that can be used to promote equality.

Involving many of the ILO's technical departments and field structures, the project covers 12 work items, including development of improved statistical data concerning job segregation; women's employment in developing and threshold countries; maternity protection; available procedures to implement women's rights set out in law; improved communication to encourage more women to diversify their skills and occupations; sexual harassment; participation of women in trade unions; collective bargaining and the promotion of equality; and affirmative action.

At the end of the project in 1984, the ILO proposes to organize an International Forum on Equality for Women in Employment in a Changing World: Challenges for the Future. The Forum would

examine the trends (positive and negative), unresolved problems, and challenges and opportunities arising in the area of women's work in response to changes in the socio-economic context. The Forum could also provide a framework for a critical evaluation of the various approaches for responding to these challenges and identifying the elements of a possible agenda for future action by the ILO and its constituents: governments, employers and workers.

The project is generating up-to-date data, insight and ideas on effective policies and other measures for promoting women's equality in employment.

For further information and details of this project, please contact Eugénia Date-Bah, Director of the Project at the ILO.



Unequal race to the top

The statistics agree: all over the world men hold the highest management positions. Regardless of regional particularities or scale of responsibilities, two other factors are also clear: the inequalities between men and women are greater, the closer they get to the top of the hierarchy; but the inequalities have also begun to lessen in recent years.

According to ILO estimates, women represented 36 per cent of the working population of the world in 1990: 41.4 per cent in the industrialized nations and 34.3 per cent in the developing world. In the majority of countries, women hold only a small proportion (between 10 and 30 per cent) of management positions, and even fewer (less than 5 per cent) of the very highest posts.

The statistics generally confirm what is obvious to almost everyone: women are clearly under-represented at the highest levels of the occupational hierarchy.

From this point on, however, in more detailed analysis or in international comparisons, a large degree of caution is required.

Note, for example, Table 1: how is it that women represent more than 40 per cent of managers in Australia, Canada and the United States, and less than 15 per cent in Denmark?

The fact is, everything depends on the definition of the terms "management" and "manager". While many countries include only the directors of large companies and high-ranking officials in this category, other countries include directors of small and medium-sized enterprises as well as middle managers. A large proportion of women at the head of small and medium enterprises - which tends to be more and more frequent, in the United States for example - can thus give the impression of a relative equality between men and women managers.

If, bearing this in mind, the figures in Table 1 must necessarily be viewed in a relative way, it is nonetheless clear that this Table also reveals an obvious gap between the level of women's participation in the workforce and their numbers in management positions (whatever the definition) in countries as different as Japan, Turkey, the Republic of Korea, Malawi and Bangladesh.

Another obvious point is illustrated in Table 2: between 1985 and 1991 there was an increase nearly everywhere in the percentage of women managers. More precisely, of 41 countries for which figures were available, 39 reflected this trend. The number of women directors and

managers declined only in Paraguay and Greece.

Statistics available to the ILO from other sources* make it possible to complete the general picture, with specific observations on regional and national tendencies.

Taking the industrialized countries together, the percentage of women managers is highest in North America and Northern Europe, and lowest in Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Southern and Western Europe. In addition, the higher up the career ladder of management positions, the fewer are the numbers of women to be found.

In the United States, for example, women make up nearly 41 per cent of directors and managers of all categories, but represent only 11 per cent of high-level directors and managers and no more than 3 per cent at the "top level" of management of large companies in the private sector. In the German Federal Republic in 1986, only 1.5 per cent of the "top brass" of industry were women. In Spain, where the number of women workers has increased very rapidly, they now make up 39 per cent of all public service employees, but only 8 per cent of high-level managers.

The large regions of the developing world show similar tendencies, with of course regional and national particularities.

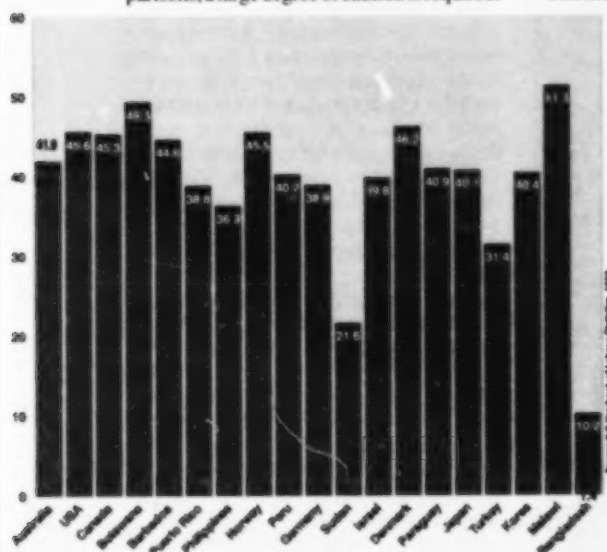


Table 1: Percentage who are women in
■ in management ■ in total employment

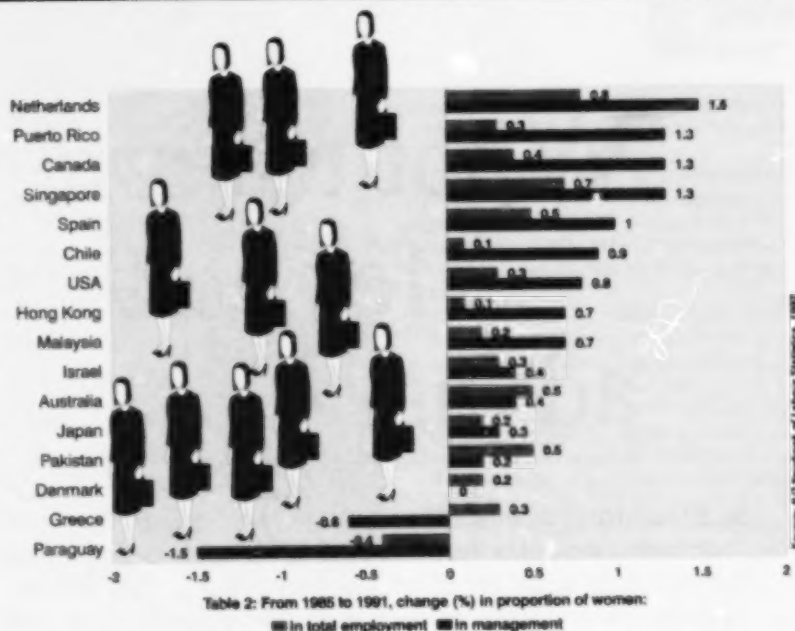


In Africa, where the agricultural and informal sectors predominate, few women are to be found in positions of responsibility and fewer still among decision-makers. In the public sector, African women occupied only 13 per cent of administrative and managerial jobs during the last decade. And this figure is double the number of African women managers in the public services sector during the 1970s.

In North Africa women hold even fewer management positions. In the Sudan, where the vast majority of women work in agriculture, they represent only 10 per cent of all public sector employees. In Egypt the situation is much the same.

Women's access to management positions in Asia and the Pacific varies according to the vastly complex economic, political and social conditions of the region. In 1987 women reportedly held some 10 per cent of administrative and managerial positions in southern and western Asia (another figure which had doubled since the 1970s).

In Thailand, figures for the 1980s show that women held 6 per cent of top executive positions and 26 per cent of administrative and management jobs in the civil service. The trend in Thailand suggests that women government officers will eventually outnumber their male colleagues,



and that there will be more women middle managers in the long term.

The Latin America and Caribbean region had the highest proportion of women in administrative and managerial jobs during the 1980s, some 20 per cent, a good many of them in the public sector. In Argentina, they account for 28 per cent of public

administration posts, and 12 per cent of jobs with public enterprises.

*Sources: Year Book of Labor Statistics (ILO), 1991; The World's Women 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics (United Nations); UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, INSTRAW News, No. 17, Spring 1992.



Jacques Mallard

BARRIERS TO WOMEN IN THE USA

As the 21st Century grows nearer, women are playing increasingly more important roles in the U.S. workplace, but a disproportionate share are still locked in lower-paying jobs. Black women, who are more than twice as likely to be unemployed than white women, face even greater obstacles.

A U.S. women's advocacy group estimates that it will be as much as a hundred years before women gain equity in the nation's labor force. According to The American Woman 1990-1991: A Status Report, of the Women's Research and Education Institute (WREI), "It is estimated that at the current rates of change, it will take women from 75 to 100 years to achieve complete occupational integration in the workforce."

There are signs of progress, though virtually every close observer of the status of American working women sees a long road toward equality. While a little more than half the workers in professional specialty occupations and 40.6 per cent of workers in managerial jobs in the US are women, they also account for four of every five employees in administrative-support jobs (clerical, secretarial), according to the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Women made "important gains" in managerial and professional occupa-

tions between 1972 and 1991, with the proportion in executive, administrative or managerial occupations rising to 11 per cent in 1991 from 5 per cent in 1972, the BLS reports. Over this 19-year period the proportion of women lawyers rose from only 4 per cent to 19 per cent, while a little more than 20 per cent of doctors were women in 1991, nearly double the 1972 proportion, according to the BLS.

The data also show that the pay gap between men and women is narrowing. In 1991, full-time women in wage and salary jobs had average earnings that were 74 per cent of men's, up from 63 per cent in 1979. However, the WREI survey reported that, among full-time workers, the average woman college graduate still earns less than the average male with no more than a high school diploma. The average black woman college graduate in a full-time position receives less than 90 per cent of her white counterpart's salary, WREI points out.

"The most significant change in the U.S. workforce over the past 40 years," the AFL-CIO states, "has been the tremendous increase in the number of working women. Despite this growth...working women do not enjoy a similar growth in economic status. Women continue to face pervasive economic and social discrimination."



What training for career advancement?

In an economy characterized by technology, mobility and increasing complexity, training is often recommended as the solution to all problems. But training is a vast field, and the real implications for equality or discrimination are usually not clear.



Is training really the key to advancement, of men or of women? Is the lack or the inadequacy of training of women in various fields the real reason why there are far fewer of them in top positions?

About half the students attending universities in Europe are women; nonetheless, they are still largely under-represented at the professional level. A survey recently conducted in Europe of 30 enterprises employing about 500,000 people (one-third of whom were women) revealed that only 6 per cent of these women occupied supervisory or higher technical posts; also, only 0.5 per cent of the women employed were represented in the top 10 per cent of management.

In which lines of work are women in the majority? What real possibilities for career counselling do they have at the conclusion of their studies? What opportunities do they have to continue and supplement the training they have already received at university?

According to Mrs. Gretchen Goodale, an ILO official responsible for women's programs, "the relationship between education and training and women's career development and mobility is a complex and paradoxical one."

Complex relationship

"In many ways," she points out, "the education and training women receive may be criticized as contributing in large part to their unequal position, compared with men, in the labor market. At the same time, training and education are also cited as a part of the solution, assuming a central place in equal opportunity initiatives."

Training programs influence the professional choices of millions of women, orienting most of them to a limited number of trades considered "feminine", particularly education, health, the social services and office work. "In this way," Mrs. Goodale continues, "training is a source of occupational segregation by sex."

The values of society

The system of education and training is itself closely dependent on the dominant values of society, its traditions and prejudices, and begins "at the very first stages of socialization", according to an ILO report. In other words, it starts within the family, in the cradle or at kindergarten. Vocational choices are often influenced by the toys given to children such as dolls, lorries, homemaking and nurses' clothes and equipment, or building sets of the "lego" or "meccano" type.

Recently, in the United States, women's organizations reacted strongly to the marketing of a talking doll which, among other things, said "mathematics is hard". It is as if girls, allegedly more inclined to play with dolls, were being dissuaded from studying the "more difficult" subjects — an image of what happens to young people at every stage of the education and training process.

As a general rule, "women tend to receive less formal training than men," Mrs. Goodale continues. "Furthermore, the training they do receive is narrower and more job-specific, often without the transferability and accreditation necessary to be recognized in a broader market."

"For training to alter imbalances in the labor market and bring about the entry of women in a wider range and higher levels of occupations, it must be planned as part of an overall strategy for achieving equal opportunity objectives."

Mrs. Goodale also recommends measures to help women meet their responsibilities within the home, and a new approach to the organization of enterprises, leaving room for more flexible and more "participation-type" structures in which women can become more readily integrated as well as interested.

"Training and awareness-raising are an essential component for bringing about change and 'valuing diversity' in organizations and should not be confined to women, as if it were a woman's problem or issue", says Mrs. Goodale. "It is an organizational issue for which management and workers are directly responsible and in which they are implicated." □

"When I told the Director that I was ready to move to a foreign country to take over one of subsidiaries, he was rather astonished."

Hair cut short, finely featured energetic face, Cecilia is the image of dynamism and self-control. Just over forty, with two grown-up children and her husband — a marketing consultant — ready to follow along, she has no intention of resting on her laurels, despite an already full career.

She began her career as a translator-interpreter — a profession often traditionally assigned to women. At present



Jacques Maillard

Dossier

Learning to be a manager

For a worker or salaried employee at any level the key to a successful career is the ability to increase one's scope of responsibility within the enterprise, not vocational training or the acquisition of a technical degree or diploma, which is really little more than an "entrance ticket" to land the first job.

Continued training or on-the-job training has come to represent the key factor in career advancement, particularly when it is a question of acquiring or improving management skills.

In most countries women have only limited access to training of this type. Why is this? How can they be helped to overcome

the obstacles leading to greater responsibilities? These are questions *World of Work* asked Mme. Marion Gétaz, Founder and President of the Women's Institute of Management (IFMA), in Lausanne (Switzerland).

"It must be said first of all," Mme. Gétaz emphasizes, "that the tasks assigned to heads of enterprises and, increasingly, to higher technical and supervisory personnel, are largely multi-disciplinary. The knowledge and technical skills required to come to terms with the major problems in all their complexity are most often acquired on the job, and only after the individual has started on a working career. Such

skills and abilities are acquired through experience and supplementary training and education."

Continued training is therefore essential for a member of middle management or a senior technician or engineer to move upward and acquire greater responsibility. For this reason it must be integrated into career plans.

"Nevertheless," according to Mme. Gétaz, "in the great majority of countries, enterprises and higher management place very little emphasis on careers for women. They fail to lay out career programs for women or to make the required continued training and education available to them."

"As a result, a gap, often impossible to remedy, very quickly develops between men and women in career advancement, even in cases where basic training and education are identical. Women are forced by circumstances to stay in the groove resulting from their initial training, even when it becomes obsolete, whereas their male colleagues are given opportunities to broaden their knowledge and qualifications and bring them up to date. In this way, women rapidly fall behind and are unable to compete."

Solutions of the type proposed by IFMA constitute possible answers to this problem. Their major advantage, according to Mme. Gétaz, is that they "make women as well as all enterprise heads aware of the fact that an economy which refers to itself as 'developed' cannot do without the vital resources represented by one half of the population." In Lausanne, the Institute offers a choice between an accelerated, full-time management course lasting three and a half months or on-the-job training extending over ten months. Most of the women attending the courses have secondary or university diplomas and many of them pay for the training out of their own pockets. Employers collaborate by making the necessary arrangements.

"In any event, women who want to get ahead must do something to avoid being left behind," Mme. Gétaz states firmly. "It is up to them to demand the necessary supplementary training and education and to make sure that they are not permanently excluded from career advancement. They must also constantly strive to take over new tasks when they are in staff positions, so as to enlarge the scope of their activities."

Mme Gétaz considers that women have greater opportunities during the present difficult period of restructuring of the economy. "Nonetheless, they can only be convincing if they are able to offer attitudes appropriate to managers, as well as genuine knowledge and professional ability."

INTERVIEW

she is Director of Management Information Systems at an industrial group with 2,500 employees. She is calmly looking forward to assuming even more responsibility.

When she first started, at IBM, she was still young; it proved the chance of a lifetime, enabling her to learn a great deal, not only in electronic data processing and systems analysis. "The firm's policy has always been to give its employees the best training available, knowing that they would draw equal benefits from it," she says.

Looking back, she believes it was her

Swedish education, which recognizes the equality and social responsibility of women, that gave her that first chance with IBM. However, her husband also deserves credit for her later success, since he not only took her advancement in stride but encouraged it.

She is now attending an on-the-job management training course at the IFMA in Lausanne. She appreciates most of all the opportunity to develop her powers of analysis in economics and finance. This is another step on the way to assuming greater responsibility.

(Interview by Michel Fromont)



Motherhood, family, career

Marie-Claire Séguret*

Having at once a job and family responsibilities is now the norm. But to assume increasing responsibilities on the job, in other words "to make a career" – is this really possible? Certainly, M.-C. Séguret replies. Everything is fine as long as the enterprise understands that most of its employees have a family and that, in the daily routine of family life, the man must function as an active partner.

With just a few outstanding exceptions, the first women to have access to higher education had to sacrifice motherhood to build their careers. In the following generations, some did not want to make this choice. They did not have an easy life and, to this day, many competent women cannot crack the "glass ceiling", the invisible but very real barrier which still prevents all too many of them from making it to the top.

How many company directors have failed to advance the career of really capable women, simply because they were convinced that the women's responsibilities would impinge upon their professional duties? How many women, wishing to build a career, have felt that, to prove their worth, they would have to comply with

the male corporate culture and agree to make themselves 100 per cent available? And how many women have also felt that, to prove their femininity, they had to spare their husbands any domestic chores?

When the working world was essentially male, professional and private life were fully compatible, for they were quite separate. With married women and young mothers joining the workforce, it became apparent that conflicts arose when professional and family life were interwoven. An effort was then made to permit women successfully to play their "double role" at work and at home.

The ILO recognized the merits of this approach but very soon realized its limits. Indeed, on the basis of the idea that men and women have different social respon-

sibilities, which in turn involve different working relations, that approach did make allowance for the difference. But, at the same time, it reinforced the very discrimination it set out to combat.

In 1981, the ILO adopted standards relating to workers with family responsibilities and confirmed that measures taken to reconcile professional and family life should apply equally to men and women. Several national legislations have adopted this principle.

Evolution of behavior

It would be unrealistic to claim that practice already reflects written law and that the law has changed deep-rooted habits. Still, a change is starting to come about. As it is prompted by the desire for a better quality of life, even economic crisis has not caused it to falter. Many men now want to spend more time with their families without, however, losing face at work, while women, who have had enough of their social strait-jacket, are proving that there are other ways of being just as productive.

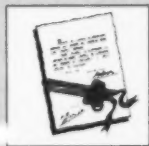
In certain industrialized countries, given the demographic situation, some enterprises are beginning to sit up and take notice of their employees' family concerns by helping them to find satisfactory child-care facilities and offering them flexible working hours with no strings attached while, wherever possible, allowing them to update their qualifications. This pays off in terms of improved performance because of the resulting increase in job satisfaction.

These corporate efforts bear their richest fruits when the couple has agreed to share family chores. The comment by the young British lady executive who said that "to make a success of your career, you have to choose the father of your children with as much care as you select the company you work for" is reminiscent of the agreeable way in which the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women stated, as early as 1979, that "a change in the traditional role of men as well as the role of women in society and in the family is needed to achieve full equality between men and women".

Although it is up to each couple to strike a new balance, it is up to employers, trade unions and the public authorities to encourage this development. Better career prospects for women, a more balanced and richer family life and, in the final analysis, the chance to make the most of what each individual has to offer – these are the rewards.

* ILO official, Working Conditions and Environment Department.

RELEVANT ILO STANDARDS



"With a view to creating effective equality of opportunity and treatment for men and women workers, each Member shall make it an aim of national policy to enable persons with family responsibilities who are engaged or wish to engage in employment to exercise their right to do so without being subject to discrimination and, to the extent possible, without conflict between their employment and family responsibilities."

(Convention No. 156 concerning equal opportunities and equal treatment for men and women workers:

workers with family responsibilities)

"...all measures compatible with national conditions and possibilities should be taken –

- a) to enable workers with family responsibilities to exercise their right to vocational training and to free choice of employment;**
- b) to take account of their needs in terms and conditions of employment and in social security; and**
- c) to develop or promote child-care, family and other community services, public or private, responding to their needs.**

(Recommendation No. 165 on the same subject)



Jacques Mailand

As Mme Aubry says (see the following page), "It isn't easy for women to have, in one day, an extremely busy work schedule as well as a full family life." The problem exists in all regions and at whatever level of responsibility of the people concerned. But it should no longer be a woman's problem only.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: A BALANCE SHEET

To redress the effects of past discrimination and establish equality of opportunity between men and women workers in the working world: these are the general aims of "affirmative action" programs officially adopted today in many countries, with related legislation, often as a result of past pressure from equal opportunity groups supported by the trade unions. In the area of career planning, these programs comprise a group of measures designed to promote access of women to management positions.

A few examples will serve to illustrate progress so far as well as how much remains to be done.

● **In Australia,** the Affirmative Action Act of 1986 covers all companies and institutions of higher education with more than 100 employees. In all, some 3,076 companies and higher education institutions are currently required to comply with the Act, involving approximately 48 per cent of the Australian workforce. Many of these enterprises have now developed affirmative action programs. Avco Financial Services, a subsidiary of Avco Corporation (USA), which employs 785 full-time staff, decided to modify its policies and recruitment methods, in order to allow equal access of men and women to positions of responsibility. A group of some 40 managers was trained in selection techniques, and recruitment criteria based on sex were identified and eliminated.

In three years, from 1988 to 1991, the number of women branch managers increased from three to 15, and the number of women in the account representative/assistant manager positions rose from 13 to 55. The trade union concerned expressed its satisfaction with the program at Avco.

An evaluation of the application of the Affirmative Action Act carried out in 1991/1992 reveals that in spite of evident goodwill on the part of employers, the quality of affirmative action programs will have to improve if women are to achieve true equality with men on the job.

● **In the United States,** the Labor Department has encouraged companies for many years to take concrete measures to break through the "glass ceiling" which blocks the promotion of women to top management positions. The Bureau of Labor Statistics now reports that women have made "important gains" in managerial and professional occupations. The number of women holding executive, administrative or managerial positions rose from 5 per cent in 1972 to 11 per cent in 1991. But the Labor Department also reports "mixed results," and says that "the commitment and actions that led to this progress must be maintained and enhanced if the goal of full and equal opportunity is to be realized."

A recent survey of 400 U.S. women managers conducted by Business Week shows that the problems are far from being solved:

— Nearly half the women questioned reported that large companies have done "somewhat better" in promoting women executives over the past five years;

— Seventy per cent of women managers (as opposed to 60 per cent in 1990) expressed the belief that the male-dominated corporate culture is an obstacle to their success.

Another study of the career progress of more than 1,000 U.S. men and women managers found that, while the two groups followed similar patterns, "women with equal or better education earn less on average than men, and there are proportionally fewer women holding top management positions."

● **In Zimbabwe,** the public sector was the first to apply "positive action measures" in 1990, in line with the Government's policy of promoting equal opportunities for men and women. Steps were also taken to facilitate admission of young women to technical schools and institutions of higher learning.

In all the ministries and other public services of Zimbabwe, the objective is to guarantee that 30 per cent of middle and senior management positions be occupied by women, as they constitute 30 per cent of staff at entry level in the public sector. After a period of research and planning, the program in the public services began in 1991: identification of women who could be promoted or promoted after exposure to management training, more women students in educational institutions, and similar measures.

It would appear that the impact of these measures is slow in making itself felt. In the second year of implementation, the program still falls short of achievement of its goals. Still, gains have been made. In the space of some 18 months, the number of women in the highest positions went up from 19 to 32, although in percentage terms this means from a little more than 10 per cent to somewhat less than 15 per cent. In middle-management positions there is as yet very little change.

Among the factors which have hindered the success of the affirmative action program in Zimbabwe are the following, cited in the study prepared for the International Labor Office: lack of clear and adequate information about the policy; consequent resistance and resentment by some men; fear and lack of confidence by the women themselves; and family attitudes, expectations and responsibilities.



“It’s up to women to make things change”

For Martine Aubry, French Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, equal access to education and training is the key to a more equal sharing of professional responsibilities between men and women. “It is above all a question of outlook”, she believes, emphasizing the importance of women themselves in their evolving role. Interview.

World of Work: Women still remain – by far – much less numerous than men in positions of responsibility, whether in business or in public life. In your opinion, what are the main reasons for the continuing inequality?

Martine Aubry: There are many reasons. We have to understand that the relatively small number of women in key sectors of economic, financial and political life is just a mirror image of the position of women in society generally. In businesses, discrimination takes place at the time of recruitment, but also continues later on regarding access to training and career development.

It is first of all a “cultural” matter. Too often, in certain sectors the idea of considering women for leadership positions is first seen in terms of authority relationships with their masculine colleagues, or of problems of availability because of maternity and taking care of children. Consideration of their actual competence and know-how takes second place.

This “discrimination” begins at school: as long as young girls are not channeled into programs traditionally reserved for boys, they cannot acquire the knowledge that will make them more competitive on the job market.

In addition, working women are less well trained than men and later on have more difficulty in recycling in the face of technological change.

WW: What obstacles have you had to overcome to reach the position you hold today?

MA: I don’t feel I’ve had to overcome too many obstacles, and this includes



Martine Aubry is 42, married, mother of one child. With a university degree in economics and another in political science at the Institute of Political Studies (*Institut d’études politiques*) in Paris, she has had a brilliant career in French public service and private industry. She was Director of Industrial Relations at the Ministry of Industrial Relations from 1984 to 1987, and Associate Director of the Pechiney chemicals group from 1989 until her nomination in May 1991 to the position of Minister of Labor and Social Affairs which she holds at the present time.

the position I occupy now. When I first began to work, the French government administration had already carried out its “revolution”, if I may put it in these terms. The generation of women before me had already “done all the work”: the accession of women to important positions had already begun. At the Pechiney

[chemical] corporation I was the only woman among 100 managers at the top and it worked out very well, even if the obstacles are more evident in the private sector, which would also seem to be more “macho” than government.

Unfortunately, men’s attitudes oscillate too often between seduction and paternalism; but it’s also up to women to let it be known that other attitudes are possible.

It is true that, to be perceived as achievers in some sectors, women have to show greater competence, strength and availability than their masculine colleagues. But here again I don’t want to exaggerate: everything changes, and it’s also up to us women to help develop other attitudes and make sure the question isn’t always seen in the traditional terms.

WW: Are there “recipes” for reconciling high responsibility with personal and family life? What are they?

MA: Unfortunately, there are no such recipes. In spite of all, I believe women are less career-oriented; they feel that the quantity of work accomplished is not an aim in itself. In other words, I believe that today each woman and even each man “juggles” with work and family time. I have the impression that I do much the same as all other women who have a family and a career. I set up rules for my life which I try not to break. For example, I set aside time which I devote exclusively to my family.

In short, like a large number of women, I grope, I hesitate; I haven’t found the ideal solution. It isn’t easy for women to have, in one day, an extremely busy

work schedule as well as a full family life. It is perhaps for this reason that the idea of family-service jobs which make daily life easier by taking care of children and the elderly seems so important to me. There are numerous real jobs to be created which could liberate young women from a certain number of chores and give them time to take care of their children and have a richer family life.

WW: In your capacity as Minister, what measures do you expect to take or would you wish to take to promote equality of access to positions of responsibility?

MA: In France, the present parliamentary majority has voted in laws, such as the law on professional equality of 1983, which support non-discrimination. The construction of Europe and a certain number of European directives also move in this direction. In our country we have the good luck to have a high rate of women's employment, one of the highest in the world.

From this, we need to work for even greater compatibility between professional and family life, either through development of part-time work or more generally through other ways of organizing working time, for men as well as for women.

It seems to me that the most important thing remains equal access to education and training. The measures recently proposed on the issue by the French Government are very important. But the legal codes are not everything. Employers must also evolve and integrate the new measures. It is above all a question of the evolution of attitudes: these change slowly, but surely.

WW: What role can the social partners play in all this?

MA: The social partners and their organizations are no less guilty than anybody else of imitating the "classic" patterns of society, particularly in the meager representation of women at management level. The arrival of a woman, Nicole Notat, at the head of a French trade union, made quite an impression. But it is also a clear indication that there is still much progress to be made.

In addition to daily evolution at the workplace, the role of the social partners is also to reflect, to promote, to be involved in the creation of new models, of new methods of work organization which better correspond to today's realities. The social partners have a fundamental role to play in making social practice evolve and, thereby, the attitudes of men and women. □

Professional organizations: determined progress

The problems and progress concerning women's access to management positions in employers' and workers' organizations would appear to be much the same as in enterprises, governments and other institutions.

In the trade unions change is now being brought about rapidly through women's conferences, equality committees, seats reserved for women on executive bodies, guarantees of proportional representation and other changes and new approaches to conducting union business, and workers' education.

Shirley Carr, former President of the Canadian Labor Congress (CLC) and Member of the ILO Governing Body, states:

"As women we are not faring well under this world regime of poverty, pollution and profit. But we have an enormous contribution to make if we are prepared to organize and work across boundaries to build a world fit for ourselves and our children to live in.

"In our unions, we are already a force to be reckoned with, and our issues are now accepted as *bona fide* labor issues. Traditional models of organization are giving way to more co-operative, flexible, accessible and democratic ones. In Canada, as trade union women, we are also reaching out to build networks and coalitions, with the women's movement, the environmental movement and other

partners for social change."

The goal, simply put, is equality: political, economic and social equality – in high places as in low.

For **Cornélie Hak**, Adviser, International Social Affairs, the Federation of Netherlands' Industry (VNC) and also Member of the ILO Governing Body, the situation has changed quite radically for women's access to positions of responsibility over the past 40 years. In her organization, for example, she feels there are now very few if any obstacles to women's advancement.

One reason is what she calls a "change of attitude" toward flexible hours, part-time work and special hours. "This is what women want and what they offer." She herself has one two-day and one three-day secretary, who co-ordinate the work with no real problem. However, she emphasizes, training is essential for women who ultimately hope to occupy decision-making positions.

The major problem for women's careers in Holland, as she sees it, is a desperate lack, still fairly common about the globe, of proper childcare facilities and provisions – even though in her country paid childcare is tax deductible. But Cornélie Hak does not want to see the work arrangements that facilitate women's careers legislated by government. She favors "in-company rules" negotiated with the social partners.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

In addition to ILO publications concerning all problems relating to equality of treatment between men and women at work (please contact Mrs. Date-Bah, Director of the INTERDEP Program, ILO, CH-1211 Geneva 22), the reader may wish to consult the following works:

● In English

– **Adler, N.J. and Izrael, D.N.:** *Women in Management Worldwide* (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1989).

– **Asplund, G.:** *Women Managers: Changing Organizational cultures* (London: John Wiley and Sons, 1989).

– **Breakwell, G.M.:** *Quiet Rebel: Women at Work in a Man's World* (London: Century, 1985).

– **Hirsh, W. and Jackson, C.:** *Women*

into management: Issues influencing the entry of women into managerial jobs, Institute of Manpower Studies, Paper No. 158 (Brighton, 1990).

– **Joshi, R.J.:** *Women in management: Perceptions and attitudes of managers*, in *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, Vol 26 (2) (New Delhi: October 1990).

– **Spencer, A. and Podnare, D.:** *In a Man's World: Essays on Women in Male-Dominated Professions* (London: Tavistock, 1987).

● In French

– **Meynaud, H.Y.:** *Accès au dernier cercle: A propos de la participation des femmes aux instances de pouvoir dans les entreprises*, in *La Revue française des affaires sociales*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (Paris, January-March, 1988).



Cutting the cost of stress

Vittorio Di Martino*

Programs to combat stress at the workplace are proving far more cost-effective than might have been imagined. When workers have less stress and more variety and satisfaction on the job, everybody profits – workers, companies, the economy and society as a whole.

The time has passed when stress was considered something which touched only white-collar workers, managers and professionals in industrialized countries. It is now clear that stress is a global phenomenon affecting both industrialized and developing countries and most, if not all, categories of workers, particularly blue-collar workers. Occupational stress is no longer seen in isolation, but in the context of stress generated at home and in society. Hence, the growing attention to vulnerable categories of workers: those with family responsibilities, older workers, migrant workers, the disabled, workers affected by the introduction of new technology, unskilled workers. Coupled with the globalization of stress, growing evidence is emerging of the damages caused by stress and of its cost to the individual, the enterprise and society at large.

Enormous costs

Absenteeism costs the United Kingdom £5 billion a year. It is estimated that 40 per cent of industry's stay-away syndrome can be attributed to mental or emotional problems. Statistics also indicate that psychoneurosis in the United Kingdom results in the loss of 30 million working days a year.

Stress claims in Australian government employment currently account for 4 per cent of all workers' compensation claims. Their cost, however, is 16 per cent of all claims. Stress claims are on average the most expensive of all categories of claims. The average total liability for stress claims is currently around A\$30,000, while the

next most expensive claim category is much lower at A\$13,500.

Companies in the United States are increasingly facing – and losing – compensation claims from employees suffering from job-related stress. These accounted for about 15 per cent of all claims in 1988, and their average settlement was twice that for injury claims.

Mental claims

A 1990 study by the California Workers' Compensation Institute (CWCI) reports a 700 per cent increase in workers' compensation mental claims between 1979 and 1988. CWCI estimates the number of mental claims in 1985 and 1987 to have



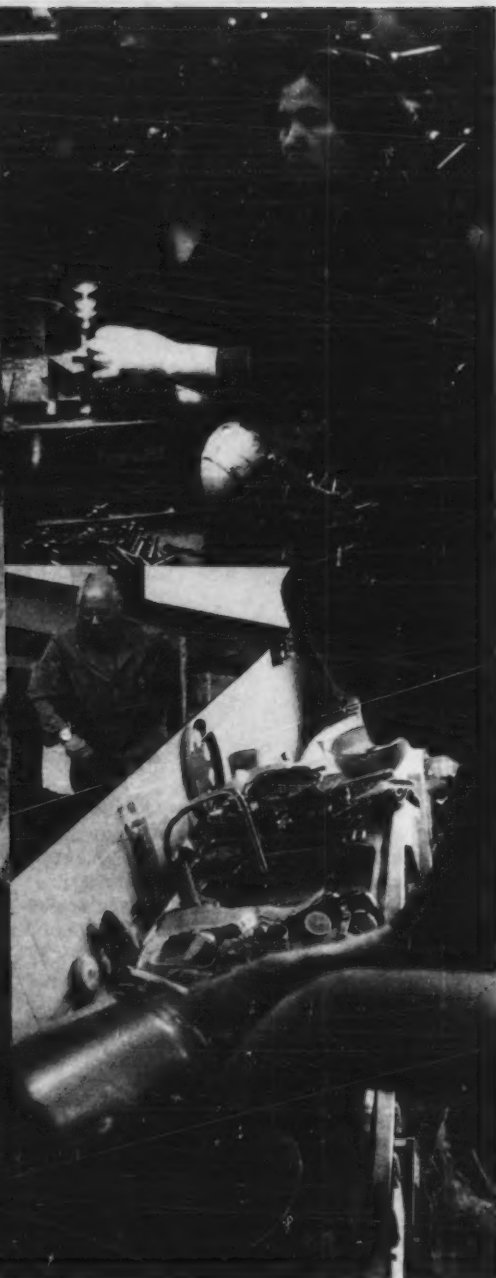
ILO PROJECT EVALUATES STRESS

The ILO has now launched a project to analyse and evaluate selected stress prevention programs. The results of this evaluation, which covers 20 case studies in nine industrialized and developing countries, have been included in a special issue of the *Conditions of Work Digest* ("Preventing stress at work", Volume 11, No. 2, 1992), which is devoted entirely to the topic of stress. The cases illustrate positive examples of how stress is handled at the workplace, the different types of intervention, the role of the parties involved and the impact of the anti-stress program. The following are some of the results achieved through such programs.

● **Anti-stress program for managers,**

supervisors, operators, loaders, foremen and maintenance staff at Western Coalfield Limited in India. As a result of this training program, based on the reclassification of tasks and group dynamics, more than 50 per cent of operators and loaders indicated a reduction of monotony and boredom and improvements in their working schedules. Between 25 and 50 per cent indicated improved responses to stresses in the physical environment, significant relief from physical ailments and a reduction of smoking.

● **Anti-stress program for postal workers in the United Kingdom.** Among the workers who benefitted from stress counseling, anxiety was reduced by 29



Jacques Matillard

Panorama

been 20,000 and 29,000, and the associated "benefit costs" \$263 million and \$383 million, respectively.

In the search for effective ways to deal with stress, many strategies and intervention programs are being designed and tested.

In Sweden, the 1991 Work Environment Act encourages employees to alter their work environment to their abilities and needs, and calls for improvement in the adjustment of the work environment to fit the workers. Management and supervisors are advised to allow or even promote such adjustment, in order to reduce psychological and social strains as well as physical risks.

A "stress industry"

In the United States, the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion reports that 60.8 per cent of worksites with more than 750 employees offer some form of program to control stress. No other health-promotion behavior has been as dominant as stress control in growth or size over the past several years in the U.S.

In other countries, similar initiatives are under way, but in most situations little or nothing is being done to combat stress at work. Even where action has been undertaken to reduce or eliminate stress, it has not always proved adequate. Self-appointed experts, pre-packaged pro-

grams good for any occasion and situation, remedial interventions focused on the effects rather than the causes of stress, have largely contributed to create a "stress industry" that is too often costly and ineffective.

New efforts

New efforts are emerging which tackle stress problems at their roots, deal with them in a systematic and preventive way, and involve a long-term appreciation of the results of each intervention. Such programs usually have the advantage of fitting "naturally" in the managerial, economic and social strategies of the enterprise. Managers maintain the initiative, with some assistance, as required, from external experts, but without completely delegating to outsiders the management of anti-stress programs, as is too often the case in stress strategies. Dialog with the workers' representatives is facilitated because of common interests.

Costs can be relatively contained and become an integral part of the necessary organization development of a sound enterprise. When a proper cost-benefit cycle is in operation, stress prevention can eventually pay for itself.

Improving work organization

Some of these programs concentrate on measures to eliminate or reduce stress by improving work organization. This may include improved job design and job content; setting realistic goals, performance standards, targets and deadlines; better organization of working time; or better compatibility between workers and machines or new technologies.

As managers often play an essential role in occupational stress, other programs focus on improving the systems of work planning, control and evaluation; introducing supportive management styles; and training managements to deal with their own and their workers' stress.

Finally, this type of anti-stress initiative can be targetted at improving personal relationships within the enterprise. These include the establishment of better channels of information and communication; the creation of autonomous working groups; measures to eliminate or reduce role conflict and role ambiguity within the organization; social programs to improve relations between co-workers; and related measures. Stress prevention at home and at work will clearly be a key feature of industrial relations of the future. □

**ILO official, Working Conditions and Environment Department*

STRESS PREVENTION PROGRAMS

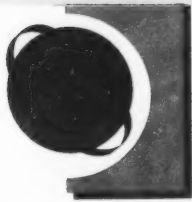
per cent, psychosomatic disturbances by 40 per cent and absence for sickness by 46 per cent in terms of the number of absences and 60 per cent in terms of the number of days.

● **Anti-stress program for blue-collar workers at ASEA Brown Boveri in Sweden.** By introducing an anti-stress program based on job enrichment and job rotation, turnover was reduced in the area of intervention from 39 per cent to 0. Absences for sickness, which had totalled as much as 35 per cent in 1989 (one day lost every three working days) were considerably reduced. This reduction affected primarily workers without chronic health problems, bringing their rate of absenteeism down from 14

to 2 per cent. Productivity increased. "On-time" deliveries, for instance, increased by 10 per cent to 98 per cent.

● **Anti-stress program for managers and assembly-line workers in a multinational manufacturing company in Mexico.** Based on an extensive involvement of all parties concerned in analyzing and shaping work organization and individual responsibilities, this program resulted, after 12 months, in a decrease in psychosomatic illness of 15 per cent, in a decrease in absenteeism and an increase in productivity. The general human and work environment in the company improved substantially.

**Preventing stress at work», Conditions of Work Digest, volume 11, No. 3*



Green business and white smokestacks

Clean, green and profitable: this is what any company should aim for in the best interests of the employers, the workers and the environment. World of Work takes a closer look at an enterprise that tries to be as ecological as possible in a European tourist paradise – the Swiss Canton of Valais.



Two features of the landscape cannot escape the notice of any visitor, whether in the vicinity or actually inside the boundaries of the factory complex. One is the smokestacks billowing out clouds of white smoke day and night; the other is the surrounding Alpine peaks which, from

the beginning of autumn, are also capped in white.

This seems almost a caricature of the confrontation between industrial activity and the environment. Right in the heart of one of the most beautiful tourist regions of the world, on first sight the Ciba chemical plant at Monthey appears as an incred-

ible challenge to nature: 148 acres of industrial plant set in an Alpine valley on the banks of a river - the Rhône - which itself has for centuries been a symbol of the indomitable force of water.

Good citizens

Yet there is no sign of disaster, or worry, or even conflict. "Ciba" is regarded by the local community as not only the most important economic presence (and supplier of jobs) but also as very much a part of the social life and a piece of the local heritage. As Alain Dupont, Mayor of Monthey, puts it, "the local inhabitants and the plant have always enjoyed a healthy relationship. Our community has never had to complain to Ciba." He also adds, "I believe in science and technology and in the desire of those in charge to protect the environment".

Even though the praise is not unanimous, the facts show that the pact reached between the plant and its environment back in 1897 has been by and large respected.

"We form part of a community and we want to be good citizens", the plant managers insist.

How do they do it?

There are three main features of the "ecological style of management" practised at Monthey, which are in fact a part of the Ciba-Geigy Industrial Group's general environment policy: Ciba research and apply economic, less-polluting production methods; they dispose of their

Developing procedures: concrete action to protect the environment begins here with safe and efficient procedures. Very often, waste is actually a badly or incompletely utilized basic material.

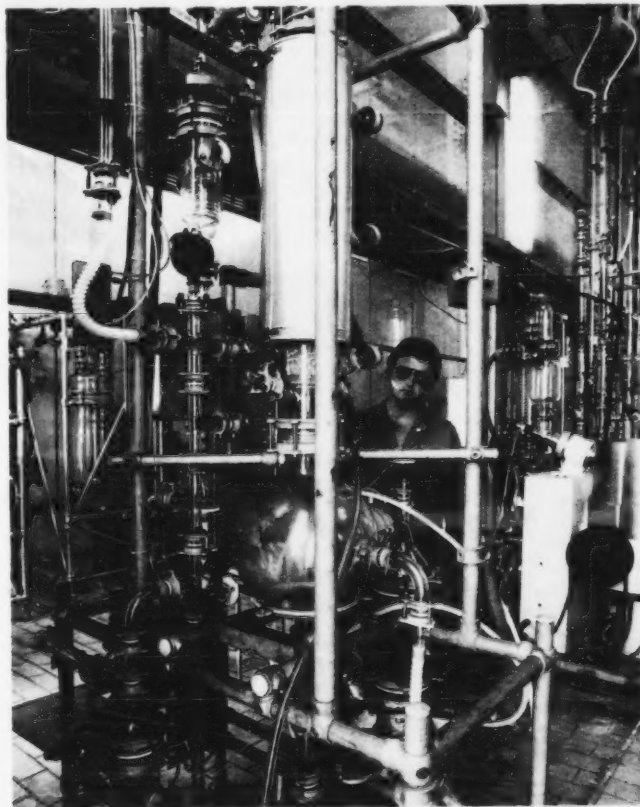


Photo: Ciba-Geigy/ILO



Photo: Ciba-Geigy/ILO

waste efficiently; and they train their staff in ecological responsibility through corporate communications.

The guidelines laid down for the Group as a whole play a decisive role. The Monthey plant is only one of some 130 Ciba-Geigy plants distributed over five continents, with a total staff of more than 92,000. As the Ciba-Geigy Industrial Group specializes in the production of pharmaceuticals and biological and technical substances for use in health care, agriculture and industry, its aim, according to the Chairman of the Board, is "to ensure prosperity at this turn of the century by placing equal importance on economic, ecological and social responsibilities". He believes that opting for a policy that respects the environment ensures comparative advantages "without which long-term success would no longer be possible in a world in which society is fast evolving and economic constraints are growing".

Safer and more compatible

In accordance with these guiding principles, each laboratory and other research unit of the Group in Switzerland or abroad has to discover and perfect products that are easier to use, safer, more profitable and more compatible with the environment and natural resources. In agriculture, for example, there is a trend towards a veritable form of plant medicine, using specific products acting on a given disease or specific parasite at a precise moment, in order to reduce the frequency of application and the quantities used.

The Monthey factory itself is one of the biggest plants in the Group in terms of tonnage produced. It has a staff of some 2,500 working in four departments: plant protection, chemicals, polymers and organic pigments.

Cleaner manufacture

The first "ecological effort" has to come from the manufacturers themselves; they have to research and apply more economical and less-polluting processes. There is currently a trend towards integrating ecological solutions into the process itself, in order to reduce subsequent treatment. For example, solvents used for making pigments are now recycled by (rather costly) equipment, which helps to save on the cost and avoid the disadvantages of incineration. Catalysts such as mercury or zinc are recuperated at source and then regenerated for re-use. Each production unit operates independently and is charged for any use it makes of the services of other units so that staff at all levels adopt a responsible attitude.

Waste processing, the second aspect of the ecological effort, calls for ever more advanced equipment for filtering, washing or destruction of gaseous effluents by burning or absorption. There is a purification plant - currently undergoing a complete revision - for biodegradable liquids. Then there is damp oxidization for the mineralization of certain organic waste, incineration furnaces for non-biodegradable water, monitored dumps for mineral ash, and the process-



HOW TO DO GREEN BUSINESS

Today's managers understand that the environment is a key element in business decisions. Companies feel strong pressures from environmentally conscious consumers. Other companies discover new markets in environment-friendly products.

"How to make money and protect the environment at the same time" is only one of the topics of a new ILO training guide* dealing with business management and the environment. It provides timely information and advice for managers at all levels, not just environment officers.

Examples illustrate the point:

- Since 1975, when the American company 3M pioneered its 3P program "Pollution Prevention Pays" in the US, more than 2,500 projects have been carried out, leading to claimed savings of over \$500 million.

- As a result of its productivity movement, the Indian BHEL corporation saved energy worth approximately 26 million rupees within two years.

The investment to recover foundry dust and re-use it to make new molds proved to be highly successful at Baxi partnership in the United Kingdom. Not only was the investment paid back in three months, but Baxi partnership was awarded the 1989 prize for good environmental management by the Industry and Environment Office of the UN Environment Program and the Commission of the European Communities.

Having a good reputation on environment matters can provide many benefits for businesses, the guide points out, such as making it easier to recruit workers, speeding up permission from local authorities to construct new buildings, and improving relations with the community (and clients) generally.

The author concludes that the environment is a matter of equal importance for employers and workers and adds, "As both employers and workers have a stake in the environment, it is also an excellent field for collaboration".

*Klaus North: Environmental business management. ILO, Geneva, 1992. ISBN 92-107289-4.



ing of used packaging materials.

The most delicate problems are currently being posed by gaseous effluents. However hard the plant tries to purify these effluents, smoke carries not only carbon dioxide, the inevitable product of any combustion, but also traces of substances such as sulphur oxide (SO₂) - the cause of certain acid rains - or nitrogenous oxides (NO_x), the harmful effects of which on the human organism and plant life have been clearly demonstrated. Now that the Ciba research workers have solved the problem of SO₂, they are turning their attention to the "NO_x enemy". More efficient burners have been fitted to the boilers, which has cut emissions by 45 per cent in two years, and efforts are continuing with the help of the Cantonal authorities responsible for applying current regulations.

Training and communication

The third aspect of Ciba's economic effort is directed at ensuring the well-being, training and participation of the staff and keeping the public informed about what is going on. "Our 2,500 employees are the best ambassadors we have among their families and friends and in society in general", a Ciba manager points out.

This comment is similar to that of an international trade union leader: "We have learnt from hard experience that there is no basic difference between the working environment and life outside



Photo: Ciba-Geigy/ILO

Installation of a controlled waste-disposal system for incineration ashes.

the plant, or between the way a company treats its employees and the way it treats its neighbors."

Each year the Monthey plant trains over 120 apprentices and holds dozens of further training and recycling courses at its training center, at a cost of over 6 million Swiss francs.

Because of the system of independent management, each staff member is asked

to contribute to the collective effort by improving procedures and saving energy. These efforts are stimulated by campaigns in the form of inter-departmental competitions aimed at making each employee more aware of these issues. Finally, environmental protection goals form a key component in the bonus schemes applied throughout the Group.

The plant also enjoys good neighborly relations with the local council and community and encourages its staff to become involved in the political life of the community and in its clubs. Several thousands of people tour the plant each year.

In all, 150 staff are occupied full time in environmental protection activities (120 of whom man the centralized waste disposal unit), but everyone in the plant is involved in trying to rationalize processes and promote the image of the corporation.

Even though it is difficult to quantify the immediate advantages of this group activity, some figures are eloquent. For example, the plant now uses 24 per cent less energy to manufacture a ton of product than it did ten years ago. As for long-term goals, they are certainly of interest to the company, but are far more so to society as a whole. □

(Report by Michel Fromont)



THE ILO'S ROLE

In accordance with a 1990 International Labor Conference resolution on the environment, development and employment, the ILO continues its research and advisory activities relating to all matters concerning ecology and the working world such as jobs and incomes, technology transfer, modernization of the workplace, and workplace safety and health, among others.

Given the essential role that tripartite co-operation can play in this area, special attention is paid to training for the social partners. There are programs for workers' and employers' organizations dealing with such matters as environmental legis-

lation, economically viable technology, ecological awareness and training, and the exchange of information.

The ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities has evolved a major program for employers' organizations of developing countries, offering them help in improving their skills in ecological matters.

The ILO also runs workers' education programs to help trade union leaders and workers' education officers to integrate ecological considerations into their work. The object of these projects is to aid trade unionists better to understand the importance of environmental matters and to devise trade union strategies aimed at protecting the environment.

Working World

CHANGES

● **Belarus** has adopted new legislation on trade unions which provides a legal basis for changing trade unions from state bodies to "social organizations". The law provides for independent trade unions, voluntary membership, and freedom to organize and carry out actions in defence of workers' rights. It also gives priority to collective bargaining. Management of social security, which was the province of the trade unions under Soviet legislation, has been transferred to the State.

● **The Government of Moldavia** has proposed ratification to parliament of 51 ILO Conventions. Although certain countries of the former Soviet Union have declared themselves bound by its previous international agreements, other countries such as Moldavia and the Baltic states have not made this choice and have decided to register their own ratifications.

● **The new social security system of the Russian Federation** took effect in January 1993. The state system of free health care has been replaced by medical insurance. Basic coverage of workers will be financed by contributions from the enterprises. Coverage for children, pensioners, the disabled and the unemployed will be taken in charge by the State. Medical services not part of the basic program will have to be paid for under voluntary contracts with insurance companies.

TENDENCIES

● **Private employment and temporary work agencies** have multiplied in many countries over the last decade, including those which have ratified ILO Convention No. 96 concerning fee-charging employment agencies. The idea of public monopoly, which predominated at the time of the adoption of the Convention (1949), has been gradually abandoned; certain countries were obliged to renounce ratification or modify the terms, for example, Germany, Sweden, Côte d'Ivoire and Finland. Considering this development, the ILO decided to include the issue on the agenda of the 1994 International Labor Conference (see page 29).

● **The growth of computer technology and telecommunications** together with an aging population in the industrialized countries will lead to a lack of qualified personnel in the areas of data processing and

computer programming, a recent ILO study shows. Certain developing countries will thus become exporters of programs if they have the trained technicians required. India has the greatest advantage in these fields because it has the third largest pool of scientific and technological manpower in the world and the second largest reservoir of such talents who are English speaking. Other countries, where wages are low, will benefit from the transfer of such less-skilled jobs as data entry; in this regard the report cites Jamaica, Malaysia and Brazil.

● **The traditional "free market" viewpoint** has revealed its limits in the face of the economic and above all the social problems of the Americas. This is one of the conclusions of the labor ministers of the member States of the Organization of American States (OAS) at their meeting in Guatemala in November. They also demand full participation in the economic affairs of their countries instead of being restricted merely to the role of "social lightning rod." Similar views were expressed also in November during the Inter-

● **One child in seven has to work in Latin America. And this is only an average (14.5 per cent), no doubt underestimated. The proportion reaches 18 per cent in Brazil or Guatemala and even 24 per cent in Haiti. It ranges between 6 and 11 per cent in Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Bolivia, El Salvador and Mexico, and stands at about 15 per cent in Nicaragua and Paraguay. Of 35 million children from age 10 to 14 in 11 countries studied, more than 5 million work. The ILO's Conditions of Work and Welfare Facilities Branch, author of the study covering the years 1985-1990, estimates that these figures could well be much higher because official statistics do not properly account for what takes place in the informal sector, because many children work at age 5 or 6 and because of the economic crisis which makes child labor increasingly a question of survival.**



This page was prepared with the collaboration of the Social and Labor Bulletin of the ILO.

● **European social partners:** dialog, protest, confrontation. European Community employers, represented by UNICE (union of industry and employers' confederations of Europe) for the private sector and CEEP (European center of public enterprises) for the public sector, met with members of the European Trade Union Congress (ETUC) to discuss "the future of the social dialog". They propose jointly to carry out the implementation of certain directives instead of being bound to the legislative process of member States, as at present. Also, the management of the French multinational Bull computer group and worker representatives from the various European countries where the company has subsidiaries signed an agreement establishing the "Bull European Committee", a joint information and consultation body which will bring together management and 29 worker representatives from the 15 European countries where the subsidiaries are located. Finally, in October railway workers held the first pan-European railway strike to protest against privatization of the rail industry. The success of the one-hour strike surprised even its own organizers.

American Conference on Social Security at Acapulco (Mexico), which adopted a declaration calling for reforms aimed at strengthening social security programs and social protection of the population.

TRADE UNIONS

● **Meeting in Hamburg for its first congress after the reunification of Germany.** The IG Metall trade union elected a metal worker from ex-East Germany to its executive board who is also a worker of Turkish nationality. Mr. Yilmaz Karahasan. This is a first for a Turkish worker and a significant symbol at a time when the country is confronted with a wave of hostility toward foreign workers and refugees.

● **The miners of Bolivia,** after numerous strike actions and occupations of work-sites, have obtained from the government suspension of the partial privatization of the mines of the national company Comibol. However, this is only a brief respite until the general elections of March 1993, particularly as stoppage of restructuring in the sector has caused the suspension of a loan of \$22 million from the World Bank.



From school to jobs: Africa's dilemma

The population explosion and persistent economic crisis mean that thousands of young men and women all over Africa join the ranks of the unemployed upon leaving school instead of going off to work. Now, action is being taken to tailor training to employment, in order to put an end to this waste of financial and human resources

Between 1978 and 1987 there was a 60 per cent reduction in the number of students in technical education in Burkina Faso, for example, while numbers in secondary education more than tripled. In Mauritania, primary school pupils recently accounted for nearly 60 per cent of school-leavers, while barely 5 per cent completed technical and vocational training.

In most countries in French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa, instruction at the general level has benefitted most from the progress in education. But it is not at this level that any form of vocational training is provided to help young people find work. The training programs that do exist are aimed largely at the modern sector, where already limited openings have been even further reduced in recent years because of economic crisis and structural adjustment.

Unprecedented unemployment

The result is an unprecedented level of unemployment among young school-leavers, while at the same time there is a shortage of skilled labor in other occupations.

This situation has led a number of African countries, with the help of the



Jacques Maillard

ILO, to start reforming their vocational training programs in order to make them more flexible and more easily adaptable to economic realities and the requirements of businesses.

Targetting jobs for young people

In practice, it is not easy to carry out improvements with this background of unemployment and economic crisis. The diversity of conditions between one country and another calls for case-by-case solutions. An ILO survey conducted in Burkina Faso, for example, suggested that what that country needed to start with was polyvalent initial training, so youngsters could find employment in craft trades, modern sector companies and, more particularly, in the informal urban and rural sectors, which offer the greatest employment and self-employment opportunities.

In general the ILO feels that young people should be guided towards quality

training leading to future job opportunities and activities. The programs should also include orientation cycles and recycling possibilities from general education to vocational training.

As the vocational training centers do not cover the full range of occupations, on-site training could form a key element of the programs. A reform currently under way in Togo aims at reinforcing the practical content of technical training and encouraging on-site training. It also provides for enabling training centers to analyse the real manpower requirements of the market. In addition, an apprenticeship and basic and advanced vocational training budget is to be established for direct funding of projects evolving from the results of regular labor-market evaluations.

A similar solution is also generating increasing interest in African countries. This is alternating training, whereby trainees divide their time between classroom and shop floor.

The fact is, there is no direct relationship between training and employment; much

depends on complex economic and social mechanisms. This is all the more true in a period of crisis, which is why many African countries have started to explore new ways of putting their young people to work.

Senegal, for example, has taken some spectacular measures which, since 1987, have resulted in the creation of 200 small enterprises providing 500 jobs for secondary school-leavers in baking, commerce, transport, market gardening and small-scale fishing. A network of small retail shops has been set up for technical training graduates. A similar endeavor in the informal sector has generated nearly one thousand new jobs.

Mixed results, operating problems

Unfortunately, after some years of operation, the results from this program are mixed. In the transport sector alone, 35 small businesses are in difficulty. Operating problems of one kind or another developed over time: lack of company spirit, insufficient legal backing, inappropriate institutional support structures. Banks, acting as financial intermediaries, did not respond very well to government encouragement. It would seem that youngsters stand a better chance of success if they work with adults who already have business experience as small-scale entrepreneurs.

In the light of such varied experiences, the ILO recommends the establishment of a well-organized national employment and training program co-ordination structure, involving representatives of government, employers and workers, and more particularly of enterprises, who contribute so importantly to the creation of jobs.

Madeleine Moulin-Acevedo □



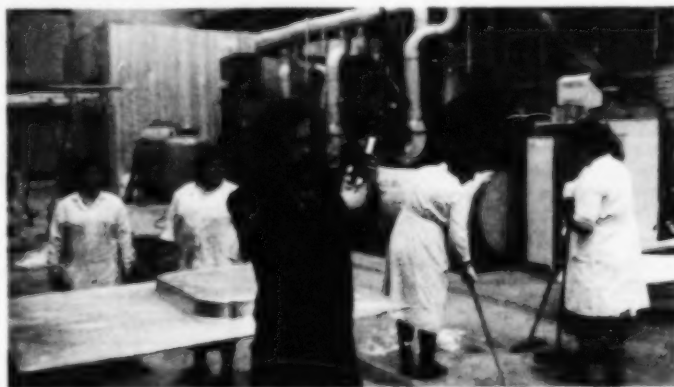
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Particularly *L'Emploi et la formation dans un contexte de crise économique: le cas de l'Afrique d'expression française*, by Jean-Bernard Célestin. ILO, ISBN 92-2206528-X (available in French only). This work deals with an ILO regional project designed to improve employment market information systems.

Helping change in eastern Europe

Unemployment and poverty have risen dramatically in the countries of central and eastern Europe during the process of economic change. In Russia, the most critical moment for employment will be in mid-1993, according to an ILO study published at the end of last year, involving interviews with over 500 industrial establishments in Moscow and St. Petersburg which employ over half a million workers. Some of the main results of the study:

- Between October 1990 and June 1992, enterprises cut total employment by over 15 per cent. The drop was biggest for state and leasehold establishments.
- In mid-1992, 55 per cent of all establishments estimated that they could produce current levels of output with fewer workers.
- Over 40 per cent of the enterprises also expected employment to fall further over the year to mid-1993; 32 per cent expected to maintain payrolls and 11 per cent expected to take on more workers.
- Nearly 70 per cent of the enterprises were planning at the time to change ownership form. "The changes taking place will accelerate the decline in industrial employment, at least in the near future," the study predicts.
- The share of barter in total output rose five fold between September 1989 and June 1992, reflecting the cash squeeze on enterprises.
- The most painful phase of restructuring – massive layoffs, factory closures, break-up of giant enterprises – is likely to arrive during 1993; development of a major program of training and retraining for redundant workers and adequate help for the unemployed is essential, the study concludes.



In Russia today: too many 'hands', not enough work

Jacques Maillard

With the financial support of various donors, during the past months the ILO has intensified its aid to the entire region. Other ILO initiatives:

- A multi-disciplinary team staffed by seven senior ILO specialists has been at work in Budapest since 1 October 1992 providing assistance on social security, industrial relations, wage systems, labor and market policies, trade unions and employers' organizations.
- An inter-regional symposium on the role of employment services was held last autumn in Warsaw within the framework of a multi-bilateral project financed by the Swiss Government. The objective was to facilitate an organized transfer of know-how and experience from the advanced market economy countries to the transitional economy countries.
- A European meeting (EEC/central European countries) on work inspection systems took place in Geneva with the aim of exchanging information, improved understanding of the needs of the countries of central and eastern Europe and ways to improve the functioning of their work inspections systems.



Recognizing the dignity of indigenous peoples

In Latin America the International Year for Indigenous People begins in a climate finally ready for recognition of the rights of native peoples. Basic to the consultations, negotiations and decisions involving both governments and the representatives of indigenous groups is one international text: ILO Convention No. 169.

Just a few months before the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the Guatemalan militant Rigoberta Menchu, another, equally significant though less publicized event occurred to reward the long struggle of the indigenous people of Latin America to obtain recognition of their rights. In July 1992 the Fund for the Promotion and Development of Indigenous Peoples and Communities of Latin America was officially established during the second Latin-American summit conference. Created at the initiative of President



and carry out related activities. The ILO has been actively involved in establishing the Fund, as have other inter-governmental institutions such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), UNESCO and the Inter-American Indian Institute.

Untraditional principles

The structure and mode of operation of the Fund depart wholly from traditional co-operation principles. Decisions are taken by a Management Committee modeled along the lines of the ILO, with States members represented by representatives of government, national bodies and indigenous communities, on an equal footing. The people themselves determine the program of activities through their representative organizations. In this way, those benefiting from the activities of the Fund are actively and directly involved in its operation; they both identify and select the projects to be financed, and administer and control the way financial resources are used.

Another fund, financed by the IFAD and technically supported by the ILO, has been set up to help the native communities of the Amazon. It will cover research into

Jaime Paz Zamora of Bolivia, and in close co-operation with representatives of all the ethnic groups concerned, the Fund will help indigenous groups determine their own development criteria and priorities

"MAKING OUR VOICES HEARD"

"For five hundred years, others have spoken for us and they did not always know the facts about our people and the extent of our suffering. But now we can make ourselves heard and travel the world so that people everywhere may know the problems of indigenous groups."

Juliana Ulcuanco, member of the Equatorial indigenous community, and Andrea Flores, Head of the Aymaras Women's Organization in Bolivia, toured Europe last year in order to make better known the "wretchedness and discrimination" that their people were suffering.

They visited the ILO and particularly stressed the seriousness of the women's situation and the priority that should



be given to environmental protection. "We identify with the Earth," said Andreas Flores. "The Earth is our life, our forebears preserved it for us. We are asking

that the environment be respected because crop farming is destroying our families and children."

For the ILO, the message is clear. "The indigenous people are placing great hopes in the International Labor Organization to help with their development and well-being. We especially need technical assistance and training," said Juliana Ulcuanco. The two visitors insisted gently but firmly on one condition that their people consider indispensable. "Any organization which helps us must be prepared to respect our way of life. No assistance offered us can ignore our values or make simplifications of our view of the universe."

FOR PEACE IN GUATEMALA

Guatemala is populated mainly by indigenous races. There are 22 ethnic groups of Maya, Garifone and Xinca origin. Here, the map of poverty and violence coincides with the areas in which these groups are concentrated. The armed combat that has been raging for ten years has now claimed 100,000 lives and left some 210,000 children orphaned; 38,000 have disappeared and over one million have been displaced.

Two years ago, a National Reconciliation Committee was established, and the Ministry of Labor decided to hold a consultation of the indigenous peoples on the content and implications of ILO Convention No. 169 before ratifying it. The ILO was asked for technical assistance in this endeavor.

The decision clearly shows the importance placed by the Government on defining a new set of relations between the State and the indigenous groups as an essential element in the peacemaking process and in strengthening democracy in the region.

The consultation began in May 1991 and ended in November with a National Forum at which the 20 delegates elected by the indigenous groups could compare their ideas and proposals with those advanced by the President of the Republic, representatives of Government, the Army, and other sectors of society. The President then presented his request asking Congress to ratify the Convention in July 1992.

With ILO technical backing the 20 indigenous delegates met throughout 1992 and pursued their pressure in favor of final ratification. By the end of 1992, the text of the Convention, which had been adopted in general terms by Congress, entered the article-by-article phase of approval.

In 1993 a multi-disciplinary mission financed by the UNDP will be going to Guatemala to help consolidate the peace while, at the same time, reinforcing the negotiating abilities of the indigenous people there.

traditional ways of using humid tropical forests and attempt to promote interchange of experiences among indigenous groups at national and sub-regional level. It will also support the adoption of policies and measures compatible with the protection of the identities and rights of these peoples and the preservation of the Amazonian environment.

In future, projects such as these will enable indigenous communities to apply their own knowledge and experience to providing solutions to the communal, technological, cultural, social and ecological problems they face.

Patient efforts

This remarkable progress is in part the result of patient efforts to make people aware of the problems during the discussions at the time that ILO Convention No. 169 (1989) on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples was being prepared, adopted, then ratified and applied. Throughout the process, the Organization and its Secretariat, the International Labor Office, played a central role in making the governments of the sub-region become more aware of the problems and change their attitudes.

The only international treaty aimed specifically at protecting the existence and culture of indigenous peoples, Convention No. 169 stipulates that it is the duty of

governments, with the involvement of the communities concerned, to carry out the necessary reforms. The text states that special measures should be taken to protect indigenous people, their institutions, their possessions, their work, their culture and their environment.

The Convention came into force in 1991 and, to date, has been ratified by four countries: Bolivia, Colombia, Mexico and Norway. The parliamentary bodies of two other countries (Argentina and Costa Rica) have approved ratification. The text is currently being considered in numerous other countries.

In recent years the ILO has undertaken major technical co-operation activities also aimed at helping the indigenous and tribal communities of Latin America. In Bolivia, for example, the Organization has contributed to the adoption of administrative measures for recognizing the territorial rights of the Tacana and Siriono tribes and the Bosque Chimanes and Isiboro-Secure Park communities. The situation of other eastern Bolivian ethnic groups is also being recognized. As part of the same UNDP-financed project, the ILO has helped decentralize the Bolivian Indian Institute, which has now become an independent administrative entity whose function is to further the development of indigenous communities.

THE ILO AND THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE



Internasyonal nga Kaahonan ng mga Tigrante
Sangalubungan a Timpuog dagiti Man-mangged



1993

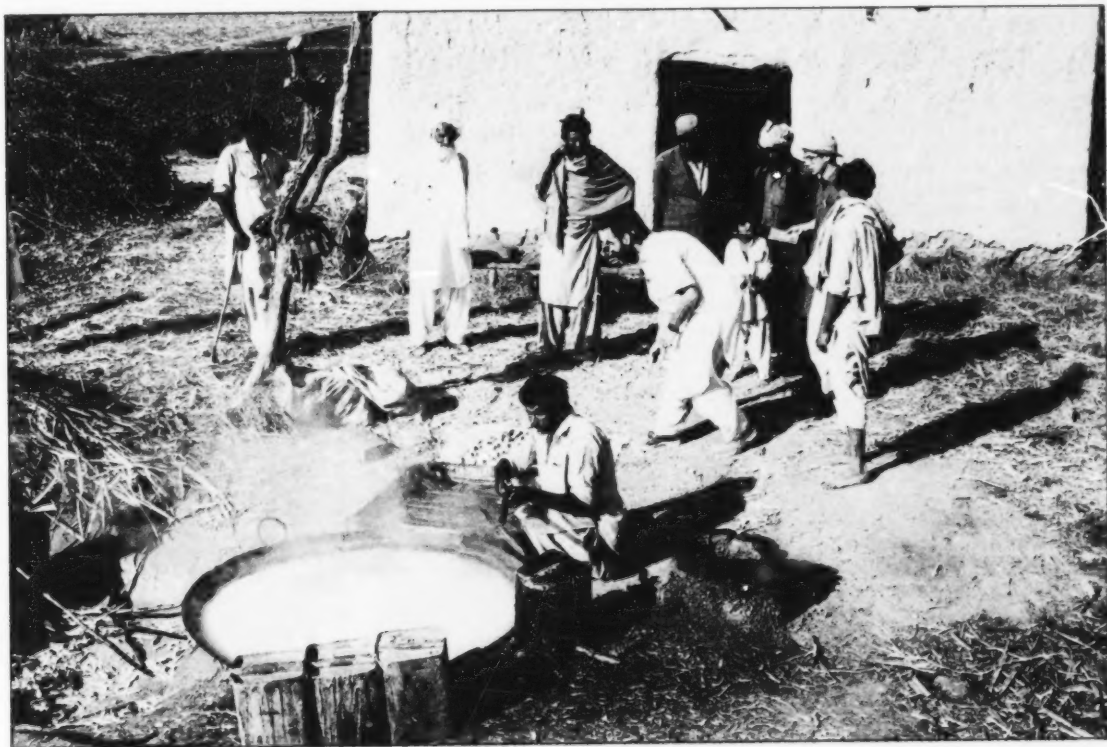
Internasyonal nga Tuig ng mga Lumad
Sangalubungan a Tawen dagiti Nainsigadan nga Umi

Inaugurated on 10 December 1992 during the 47th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the International Year will provide the ILO with an opportunity to make its aims and activities to help indigenous and tribal groups better known.

The poster above is one of a set of six designed by artists from indigenous groups to illustrate the information campaign that will be pursued throughout the International Year.

The ILO is also preparing a study of land-occupation and resource-management problems facing indigenous people in a number of African, Asian and Latin American countries. It should be completed during the course of 1993.

Steps have already been taken with the United Nations Center for Human Rights to publish in several languages a guide to existing facilities in various countries for ensuring the independence and self-sufficiency of indigenous and tribal peoples everywhere.



CMS/John Harwood

An employment plan for Pakistan

The return of emigrants from the Gulf and social changes allowing women workers to enter the workforce in numbers for the first time have combined to create unprecedented unemployment in Pakistan. Rural small-scale industry in agriculture, fisheries and forestry may offer a viable solution.

With a large part of its territory arid desert and a population of some 115 million inhabitants increasing at the rate of 3 per cent per year, Pakistan has experienced chronic poverty and under-employment for many years. But up until the end of the 1980s the country was virtually spared the outward signs of visible unemployment.

There are two main explanations: first, the particularly small number of women in gainful employment, which for a long time stagnated at around 5 per cent only of the total female population; secondly, the high emigration rate of Pakistani workers, especially to the Gulf region.

Nearly two and a half million Pakistanis emigrated between 1975 and 1982, the equivalent of one-fourth of the normal increase of the workforce over the same period.

All changed at the beginning of the 1990s. With war in the Gulf the emigrants returned home *en masse*. And, because of economic problems and changes in social attitudes, more and more Pakistani women are seeking gainful employment.

The result is a spectacular increase in unemployment, which doubled between 1990 and 1991 (3.1 per cent to 6.3 per cent), yielding a total of 2 million unemployed in 1991. Even more dramatic

is the increase in unemployment for women. According to the 1992 edition of the ILO's *Year Book of Labor Statistics*, the number of women seeking gainful employment rose from 32,000 in 1990 to 761,000 in 1991, which gives an unemployment rate of 16.8 per cent.

The labor force in Pakistan is currently increasing at more than 3 per cent per year, roughly the same rate as the population growth over the last two decades. This means that the labor force will almost certainly continue to increase at the same rate throughout the 1990s and into the beginning of the next century.

The demand for workers in the large-

scale manufacturing and agricultural sectors is not likely to increase at a rate sufficient to absorb the growing labor force during the 1990s. Both sectors tend to improve quality, exportability and profitability through investment in machinery rather than through employing more workers. Manufacturing and agriculture will in fact generate only half or less of needed jobs. Thus, there is urgent need for a new policy which encourages autonomous self-employment and small-scale employment growth, in addition to formal sector development, according to a recent ILO study*.

The growth of rural small-scale industry in agriculture, fisheries and forestry appears to offer one solution: successful rural industrialization in China and India serve as good examples. Policies in these sectors should also seek to diminish the risks for the entrepreneur, the workers and the households associated with the enterprise: coping with bankruptcies needs to be built into such policies.

Continuous advice, timely training

The study encourages state planners to give continuous advice and timely training. They should experiment with a variety of ways to fund training, in cooperation with the private sector, and introduce more accountability and flexibility into public sector training.

Priority should also be given to women's employment. In Pakistan, as in so many societies, women face a variety of problems in all areas of economic activity. Removal of age bars and flexible timing facilitate their entry and exit from economic activity. Even the most marginal economic activities of women help improve the livelihood of families and thus reduce poverty.

The study concludes with advice on general policy: Pakistan is very rich in ethnic and religious groups with competing claims for political attention. The study recommends that government should "set out clear strategic priorities and performance criteria for the decade and direct all policies towards them while resisting special interest claims that detract from those priorities".

The study contends that government should help "the most powerless people to have more choice over their employment and more opportunity to develop their human resources".

* John Cameron and Mohammad Irfan: Enabling people to help themselves: an employment and human resource development strategy for Pakistan in the 1990s. ILO-ARTEP, 1991, ISBN 92-2-108045-5.

AROUND THE CONTINENTS

▲ **THE PORTS OF MOZAMBIQUE:** Economic mainstay of an entire region, the ports of Mozambique have suffered terribly from the shock of civil war and the instability of Southern Africa: tonnage handled declined to only 5.12 million tons in 1988 from nearly 10 million in 1980. Rebuilding and modernization of the ports – particularly at Beira – have since revealed a serious lack of qualified personnel. The ILO has now assisted in the creation of a National Port Training Institute in Maputo with the financial support of the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD). The second phase of the project, begun in 1992, will strengthen the training capacity of the Institute.

▲ **INNOVATION WITH LOCAL MATERIALS:** To encourage the creation of enterprises producing construction elements from local materials and help entrepreneurs improve their ability to compete on the market: these are the goals of the second phase of an ILO project carried out with the financial support of the Swiss government in some 15 countries of Africa and Asia. After having demonstrated the commercial potential of micro-concrete techniques for the manufacture of roofing materials, the project will further help enterprises penetrate the market by increasing the range of products: blocks, pipes, paving tiles. It will also provide assistance to local participants seeking financing, as well as such services as training, equipment, credit and quality control.

▲ **PUTTING THE ARMY TO WORK:** War-ravaged Cambodia is confronted with a new problem since the signing of the peace agreements: the flow of refugees, displaced persons and demobilized soldiers returning to the country and looking for jobs. In May 1992 the ILO began an assistance program designed "to put the army to work". Financed by the UNDP, the program has three components addressing the needs of specific target areas: labor-intensive public works, vocational training and promotion of small enterprises.

▲ **PROTECTING THE MOST VULNERABLE:** In countries where there is a labor surplus, homebased work is a regular practice. It is usually carried out by poorly informed young or middle-aged women with low levels of education, generally deprived of social protection and obliged to accept sub-standard working conditions. Homebased work is particularly extensive in Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines, three countries where, in 1992, the ILO began the second phase of a project aimed at enhanced working conditions, welfare and social protection for women involved in homework.

▲ **PRIORITY FOR JOBS:** Public employment services can play a key role in promoting employment in countries affected by structural adjustment through the evaluation of training, information and counselling needs and the development of self-employment training and assistance programs, particularly in the informal sector. In order to make employment service personnel more aware of this role and how to implement it, a training course was recently organized at the African Regional Labor Administration Center (ARLAC) in Yaoundé (Cameroon) with the technical assistance of the ILO; 21 training personnel from 14 countries of French-speaking Africa participated. Other training courses are planned.



African employers urge tripartite solutions

As the process of structural adjustment continues in Africa, employers will play an increasingly important role, including helping to alleviate eventual negative consequences. Tripartism will be an integral element in adjustment strategies.

These are the main conclusions of an ILO symposium held in Abidjan last October and attended by delegates and observers from 38 African employers' organizations.

Invited to discuss the role of their organizations in the economic and social transformations presently taking place, the employers agreed that the structural adjustment process was both inevitable and irreversible. They also felt that the private sector would be called upon to play a more important role than in the past. According to Mr. Mamadou N'Diaye, of the Senegalese National Employers' Council, "the private sector plays a determining role in the promotion of economic growth and in development".

Several participants cited examples where privatization had brought very positive results at national level. Dr. Abel Gazarin, Egyptian Employers' Representative (*see box, opposite page*), spoke of the changes that had come about in his country over the past two years, including the partial dismantling of trade barriers; administrative reforms introduced in public enterprises involving separation of ownership and management; a guarantee of broad freedom of action for the top management of such enterprises; and withdrawal of the State from participation in all joint ventures.

To alleviate the negative social effects of this program, a corporate fund was established, financed by external donors. This

corporate fund was used to set up job-creation, training and recycling programs for workers who had been laid off. Financial deregulation measures included the free floating of the Egyptian pound and the removal of all Government controls on interest rates. The results were spectacular. Investment increased, hard currencies become readily available and economic growth returned.

Negative effects

Despite this positive note, the symposium did not present unlimited optimism. A number of speakers expressed serious concern over the negative effects of structural adjustment programs. Many felt that the social aspects should be taken into account from the beginning and, in fact, be an integral part of development strategy. In order to provide a better guarantee of the social acceptability of such programs, it would be necessary to make sure that the social partners were fully involved in program planning, formulation and execution.

According to Jean-Jacques Oeschlin, President of the International Organization of Employers, "tripartism is an essential element in any strategy of structural adjustment".

For the tripartite approach to be successful, it was agreed, all participants must assume their responsibilities and speak with authority. The social partners must be strong, independent, open to compromise and empowered to commit themselves fully. Only under these conditions would it be possible to overcome the economic crisis. It was generally agreed that there could be no lasting improvement in the economic situation without truly competitive enterprises. Likewise, without these there could be no full employment, no satisfactory economic development and no real social progress. J



THE ROLE OF THE ILO

The ILO program of aid to African employers' organizations should be

aimed principally at strengthening their structure, permitting them in this way to play a full role in bringing about desired economic and social changes.

ILO support was solicited particularly for the following activities:

- Training in leadership as well as in most of the other fields in which the ILO is competent.
- Training in the setting up and management of small enterprises, with particular attention to the needs of women, youth, refugees and migrant workers.
- Basic assistance for those organizations and enterprises which are weakest economically.
- Training, advice and equipment for supervisory and manage-

ment personnel.

- Publication of a manual, as well as courses on how to set up and manage employers' organizations.

- Special programs of assistance to African regional and sub-regional employers' organizations.

- A job creation program: promotion of small enterprises by employers' organizations, training in the informal sector, training of young people, population programs.

- Information on the labor market: research, collection and dissemination of data, computerized data banks, etc.

The symposium also recommended that the ILO assign a still higher priority to programs designed to strengthen the social partners in a balanced way in order to improve the effectiveness of tripartite action.



Co-operation at the work site. Profits and the ability to compete are not incompatible with the protection of the rights and well-being of workers.

Jacques Maillard



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Dr. Adel Gazarin

1. There is much discussion of democratization and liberalization in Africa. What are the implications for you specifically and for the manager of an enterprise in your country generally?

Democracy is a newcomer to Africa, one that is most welcome. For me, democracy implies a feeling of security, security against the whims of a dictator. It gives one the feeling of involvement in the affairs of one's country. It gives one the right to oppose, and to express opposing ideas, without fear for one's freedom. In brief, I feel it is the best incentive to participate positively in the building of the country's economy, and the only base for a healthy environment for economic development.

Liberalization means following the natural laws of a market economy. It means free competition, freedom of action in investments, imports and exports. It will gradually bring Africa to be part of the world.

The first steps might be difficult. Some African industries might suffer in the early stages, but with some reasonable protection they will survive and become competitive. For a manager it is a great challenge, but one that is worth accepting.

2. Africa has continually fallen behind over the past years compared to the other regions of the world. Why do you think the private sector can succeed in a region where controlled economies have failed?

The private sector can succeed where governments fail because the private sector has the real incentives to succeed and cannot afford to lose. The private sector has more flexibility in management and can quickly adapt to conditions that might change.

Of course, the success of the private sector can be achieved only if the government creates the proper environment and offers the right incentives for the private sector to move ahead without direct interference.

The private sector itself will need training, especially in management, but it will always be a better manager than the government.

3. What conditions must be met at the level of external factors as well as of internal management, for African business – particularly small and medium-scale – to grow and to create wealth and employment?

In my view, the following conditions must be met: a proper and stable investment environment, which includes political stability, a fair tax system with incentives to small and medium businesses, no government interference in pricing, and equal treatment of public and private

businesses; a sound banking system and access to financial credits with minimum collateral; for small and medium industry, proper sites with the necessary infrastructure at reasonable prices; and access to training and technology.

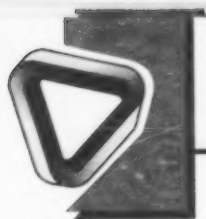
4. In a situation still greatly affected by penury, poverty and inequality, should the Government not continue to maintain its key role in the economic and social domain for a long time to come?

No, the continuation of the Government to dominate and manage the economy will only worsen the situation and lead to more poverty. The Government's role is to create the proper environment for business growth, but it should refrain from management.

5. Privatization and market economy also very often mean deregulation, savage job cuts, insufficient protection of workers' rights, and so on. In the present situation, is there a place for standards, social dialog, collective bargaining? Why?

Privatization might create temporary unemployment, but in the long run, through training, encouraging new investments and rural development, new jobs can be created. The Government should issue fair labor laws and labor standards. Collective bargaining will guarantee labor rights.

*Chairman, Federation of Egyptian Industries, member of the ILO Governing Body.



Korea prepares a new “social pact”

At the end of a phase of rapid expansion a “dragon” gets its second wind... With its ability to meet the competition in doubt, the Republic of Korea undertakes a remedy at the social level by re-establishing flexibility and efficiency in the relations between employers and workers on the shop floor.

The economy of the Republic of Korea has grown quite rapidly over the last 30 years as a result of a dynamic industry and its workers' acceptance of a well-known tradition of long hours for low wages. Korean workers were famous for their 24-hour work stints on construction sites in Saudi Arabia, and Korean exporters had a proud record of punctual deliveries. Since 1987, how-



A trade union official and a political leader at the time of a labor conflict in Ulsan (Republic of Korea) in May 1990.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

As part of a series of seminars organized between October 1992 and May 1993 by the International Institute for Labor Studies (IILS), Mr. Richard Freeman, Harvard University, gave a lecture at the ILO on the relation between democratic labor practices, government intervention in labor markets and economic growth in East Asia. This lecture, together with the other seminar contributions, will be published in a single volume. For further information: International Institute for Labor Studies, route des Morillons 4, 1211 Geneva 22.

ever, Korean employers have been complaining about declining workers' morale, and middle managers and foremen find their authority decreasing.

A major reason for the change is that industrial relations policies in the country have proved inadequate. Experts now say that unstable labor-management relations have contributed substantially to the reduction of the Republic's trade surplus.

Independent trade unions emerged in Korea with political democratization. Between June 1987 and December 1989 union membership increased from 1 to nearly 2 million. Some 3,000 unions, or two-thirds of all Korean unions, have been organized since June 1987. Most elected union officials are felt to be young and inexperienced.

Given the large number of labor disputes and the lack of trust between unions,

government and employers, the current labor mediation system cannot continue to operate. Dispute settlement is discredited because of government control over the mediation bodies and the labor mediators' lack of sufficient experience and expertise. In the process of bargaining itself, the social partners suffer from an absence of solid information and mutual trust.

To remedy the situation, the government of the Republic of Korea – which recently became a member of the ILO – asked the Organization to carry out a project to promote sound industrial relations in the country. The first priority is reform of the dispute-settlement system and improvement of labor-management co-operation.

The social climate for such a project has only partly improved in recent years. The sudden decline of strike activities

during 1990 signaled the end of three years of turbulent restructuring of labor relations: Korea had 7,238 strikes between 1987 and 1989. Despite wage increases of 78 per cent between the second half of 1986 and the same period of 1990, work morale is not high: manufacturing slow-down tactics and sabotage of products are on the rise. The complaints of the employers are supported by some recent statistics: the rejection rate for defects in export products increased from 3 per cent in 1988 to as much as 6.1 per cent in 1990.

Employers in the manufacturing sector have experienced serious labor shortages for the past two years. The wage increases did not really remedy the situation. Working hours have declined rapidly since 1987. Average weekly working hours went down by 8.3 per cent in 1988 and by 10.8 per cent in 1989. The government reduced the legal workweek to 46 hours as of March 1989 and to 44 hours from October 1990 onwards.

An adequate mediation system

The ILO project will propose ways to activate the present joint consultation schemes and promote more neutral and faster mediation services. Comparative studies and expert group meetings on labor issues in Asia will help the government and the social partners work out an adequate mediation system. Concerned groups, including newly elected union officials, will be trained for this purpose.

The project will also make policy recommendations for the improvement of industrial relations in the public sector; most public servants and teachers in the Republic do not have the legal right to join trade unions or to be involved in collective bargaining. The government may have to make major changes in the Education Act to allow teachers to discuss employment terms with employers fully and effectively, because of strong pressure from the (not officially recognized) teachers' trade unions. It is also highly likely that the union movement will have more impact on the public service sector in the 1990s.

The ILO project, which is backed by the United Nations Development Program and the Korean Government, will also provide proposals for an unemployment scheme. The government plans to introduce unemployment benefits during the seventh Five-Year Economic and Social Development Plan (1992-1996). **H.V.R. □**

ILO Governing Body

Safety and health in mines on the agenda

At its autumn session the ILO Governing Body decided that in 1994 the International Labor Conference will deal with the technical item "safety and health in mines" with a view to the adoption of international labor standards.

The Governing Body took account of the major economic importance of mining in many countries, employing more than 25 million workers world wide, and the fact that it remains the most hazardous of the high-risk occupations, with more than 15,000 fatalities every year. Certain ILO instruments and legislation in some countries are inadequate to deal with the rapid introduction of significant technological change and exposure to hazards which are unique to mines. Of special concern are workers' safety and health in labor-intensive small-scale mining occupations.

New ILO standards might cover the duties and responsibilities of governments, employers and workers for safety and health. They could refer to the need for a specific policy on prevention of occupational accidents and illnesses and to procedures to implement this policy, including technical standards, reporting, co-operation between employers and workers, inspection of

worksites, and the investigation of accidents and work-related diseases. A range of preventive and protective measures, including emergency preparedness and rescue operations, might also be specified.

The Governing Body also put on the agenda of the 1994 Labor Conference for general discussion the role of private employment agencies in the functioning of labor markets.

A record number of 111 complaints of alleged violations of ILO standards and principles on freedom of association were also placed before the Governing Body at the autumn 1992 session.

Employer and worker representatives in particular voiced concern at the human rights and industrial relations situation reflected by this surge in complaints. Several serious cases alleged extreme violence against trade unionists and their organizations, the Governing Body was told; others indicated problems of increasing complexity in labor relations.



UPCOMING MEETINGS

► 15 February - 4 March: 255th Session of the Governing Body and its committees

► 30 March - 5 April: Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Social Security and Social Protection: Equality of Opportunity between Men and Women

► 11-24 March: Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations

► 20-28 April: Tripartite Meeting on Safety and Related Issues Pertaining to Work on Offshore Petroleum Installations

► 29 March-2 April: Meeting of Experts on Co-operatives

These meetings will take place in Geneva.

From international to "global"

Marc Carriche



The harmonization of conditions of employment and of work among the sovereign States of the international community has been at the heart of the ILO's mandate since its beginnings. But the current "globalization" of problems and their solutions on a planetary scale requires in-depth reflection on the part of the Organization in regard to this mandate and the means currently at its disposal. Marc Carriche, author of the following article, is a journalist and former ILO staff member.

At the present stage of world development, economic structures as well as relations between the social partners are undergoing radical transformation.

No doubt the United Nations agencies, and the ILO in particular, are following this process very closely. This writer would like to add his own rather personal viewpoint.

Putting it all together, what do we find? A kind of waltz of production centers across oceans and continents, with all the consequences this entails; concentrations of enterprises which are increasingly transnational in structure; wave upon wave of layoffs, and chronic unemployment, a long-term unemployment which modifies man's entire relation to work and touches his inner being; increasing activity of multinational trade unions in all directions, together with the contacts established between them and equally transcontinental enterprises, which have already transformed in some cases the production process itself.

In addition, other factors must now be taken into account, such as migration and the effects of population movements, the difficulties they reveal and the difficulties they cause. Also, there are the problems of the Welfare State and the losses, in economic, social and moral terms, of workers in the wealthy countries; the creation of regional blocs of nations based on a common policy in social matters; and finally a worldwide recession which does not halt at any frontier.

All this has come about in the name of the market economy, which rushes in to fill new openings created by political developments in recent years and by its own momentum.

The vocabulary we employ is constantly adapting itself. The word "global" is used more and more often, and has come to mean the planet in its entirety. People speak of "the global economy" or "the world economy", but so far we have not heard of "global welfare" nor of "world working conditions", the importance of which may become evident much sooner than we think.

These hasty remarks raise the following question: Is the world entering a phase in its history where it will no longer be possible to distinguish between "production", "welfare" and "world", no longer be possible to treat production and welfare separately, or from any other point of view than "global"?

Since its beginnings in 1919 the work of the ILO has been carried out on a gigantic scale, highly effective, oriented to the national goals of its members.

The Standards and conclusions of the ILO have been examined, negotiated and adopted at an international level; but they can only be applied at the national level of the member States.

The founders of the ILO attempted to respond to two needs which were very keenly felt at the beginning of the century: the desire for social justice, and the struggle to do away with business competition based solely on labor costs. At the turn of the coming century is it not necessary, with these objectives still in mind, to broaden the ILO's mandate with respect to international joint action, and to improve substantially the means at its disposal to accomplish its objectives?

Which mandate and which means? This topic deserves tripartite discussion in the ILO.

The ILO has the great advantages of a tripartite structure, its labor and social standards, methods of negotiation which have been well proved, knowledge of labor problems and of realities in the field. It has the benefit of procedures for evaluation, monitoring, control and inspection. All this amounts to a structure which can be adapted to help solve the problems still to come in a "global" world.

The international press has coined a new word, "globosclerosis". This must be avoided at the least possible cost to workers and enterprises. The work of the ILO, a utopia become reality, has only begun.

This page is open to all participants and observers within the world of work who wish to express a personal point of view on any subject of interest to the ILO.



In print

New titles

Conditions of Work Digest



Each issue of this regular publication of the Conditions of Work and Welfare Facilities Branch of the ILO, which normally appears in English only, presents on a given topic a review of legislation and practice in a large selection of countries, preceded by a synthesis of current information on the subject.

■ **Combating sexual harassment at work** Conditions of Work Digest (Vol. Number 1) ISBN 92-2-108257-1. 45 Sw. frs.; US\$36; £19.80

This issue discusses recent developments on the subject, contains information on action taken at international and national levels and presents the positions of the various groups involved. Translated into Spanish.

■ **Preventing stress at work** (Vol 11, No. 2) ISBN 92-2-108265-2. 45 Sw. fr. This issue presents the results of an evaluation of programs of stress prevention undertaken by the ILO during the last few years. Twenty case studies were carried out in nine industrialized and developing countries. (See articles pp. 14-15.)

■ **International Labor Review**, ISSN 0020-7780. Annual subscription (1993) 75 Sw. frs.; £33 or \$60; prices of single issues on request.

Published by the ILO since 1921, the *Review* is a two-monthly survey of news and views on topical issues of labor policy and practice throughout the world.

The most recent issue (1992/4-5) reports on a wide range of subjects including men's and

women's earnings, prospects for agricultural and economic development in the 1990s, recent trends in the food and drink industries, the options available to labor and business in high labor cost countries in the face of economic globalization, labor flexibility in Europe, the impact on disadvantaged groups of employment restructuring in Hungary and Bulgaria, and what sort of legal framework will best promote co-operatives. A book review section completes the issue. (Also published in French and - selections only - in Spanish.)

■ **Labor, employment and training terminology 1991.** ISBN 92-2-006429-4. 90 Sw. frs. English, French and Spanish.

Contains terminology used to index and retrieve information recorded in the ILO's LABORDOC database, specialized information, services of other ILO departments, and labor libraries elsewhere. The major subject areas have been updated to reflect worldwide economic and social change: specific fields such as social security, co-operatives, the hotel and tourism sector and intermediate technology have been revised and expanded.

■ **The rural non-farm economy: Policies and processes** By Ashwani Saith ISBN 92-2-107750-0. 20 Sw. frs.; U.S. \$16; £8.80.

This short monograph provides an analytical framework for studying the rural non-farm economy (RNFE) in developing countries, as well as a detailed analysis of rural inequalities and agrarian differentiation, demand constraints in the RNFE, and successes and failures of targeted programs.

■ **The urban informal sector in Asia: An annotated bibliography** International Labor Bibliography, No. 13 ISBN 92-2-108259-9. 1 S S N 1010-8106.

22.50 Sw. frs.; US \$18; £9.90.

Most urban employment in Asia is in the informal sector, and policy-makers and researchers have become increasingly concerned with its rapid growth and low productivity, low incomes and poor working conditions. This book covers over 240 recent titles, classified by themes including women, training, labor market,

urban poverty, working conditions, workers' organizations and economic growth.

■ **Equal pay protection in industrialized market economies: In search of greater effectiveness.** By F. Eyraud et al. ISBN 92-2-108254-7. 22.50 Sw. frs.; US \$18; £9.90.

Major progress has been made in the area of equal pay between men and women, but this does not mean that discrimination has been eliminated. This book reconsiders the question by analyzing the law and practice of nine industrialized countries. A comparative chapter points to the limits of the legislative approach and highlights the need for greater involvement by the social partners.

On film

● **NEW FILMS:** The Audiovisual Section of the Department of Public Information of the United Nations and the ILO Audiovisual Unit have joined forces to produce a comprehensive 52-minute documentary on Environment and the World of Work. The film aims to identify ways in which governments, employers and workers can promote and participate in environmentally sound and sustainable development. Shooting will take place in Venezuela, the Philippines, Kazakhstan, Senegal, Germany and Belgium. The documentary will be completed in July 1993.

In the framework of its global campaign on elimination of child labor in hazardous occupations, the ILO contributed to the production of the film *Shackled Children*. Produced by CAPA, a Paris film company, the 52-minute documentary was released in January.

A recent UNDP/ILO video co-production on rehabilitation of handicapped miners from Lesotho who had worked in South African gold mines has now been released. The 10-minute video also treats the problem of economic crisis and unemployment in Lesotho in the light of political changes in the region.

For more information contact Miguel Schapira or Elizabeth Poss, Bureau of Public Information, ILO, 4 Route des Morillons, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Tel.: (022) 7996575; (022) 7997949; fax: 0041-22 7883894

● **IMAGES of men's and women's roles in two ILO projects.** This video paints a portrait of women as workers, wives, mothers, daughters and members of communities. *Images* introduces the viewer to women and men who speak frankly about their troubles, triumphs and hopes as they work toward equality. Their stories take place in two development projects of the International Labor Office.

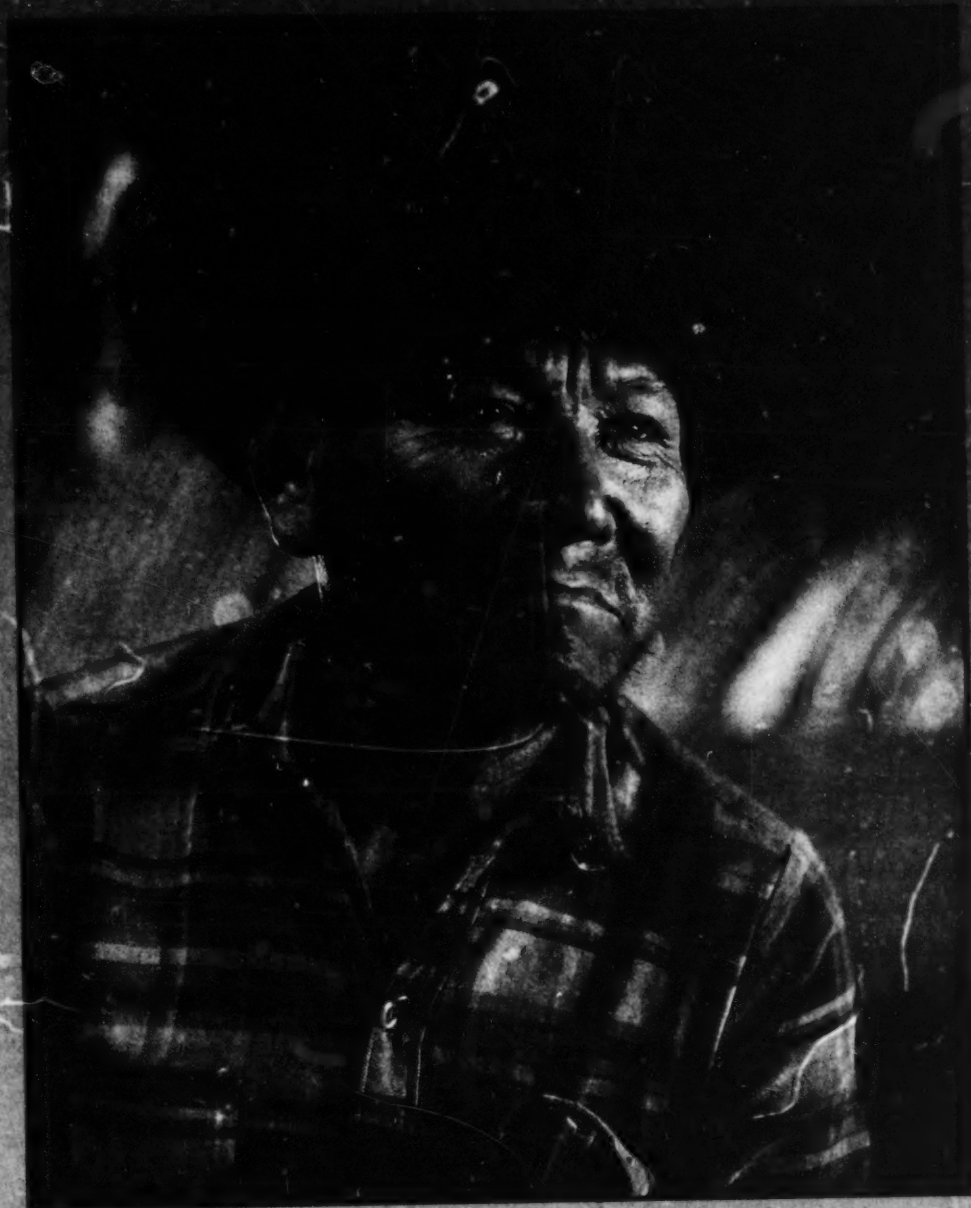
- In Uganda, a workers' education project designed only for women teaches women how to bargain for their rights in trade unions.

- In Nepal, women and men work together to learn income-generating skills in a rural training project.

Images (cassette video + manual), VHS-PAL. Duration 26 minutes. ISBN 92-2-108167-2. 50 Sw. frs. (25 Sw. fr. for developing countries). For more information and orders please contact ILO Publications, International Labor Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Fax: 22 7986358.

ILO publications can be obtained through major booksellers or ILO local offices in many countries, or directly from ILO Publications, International Labor Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. A catalog or list of new publications will be sent free of charge from the above address.

The General Assembly of the United Nations has proclaimed
1993 as "The International Year for Indigenous People"



Jacques Melinard

**"Indigenous and tribal peoples shall enjoy the full
measure of human rights and fundamental freedoms
without hindrance or discrimination."**

(ILO Convention No. 169, 1989)

Created in 1919, the International Labor Organization (ILO) brings together governments, employers and workers of its 161 member States in common action to improve social protection and conditions of life and work throughout the world. The International Labor Office, in Geneva, is the permanent Secretariat of the Organization.